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Rev. J. Hobson

CONVERSATION PIECE, CORK

MODERN IRELAND

AS SEEN BY AN ENGLISHWOMAN

By
CICELY HAMILTON

WITH 16 PAGES OF
PHOTOGRAPHS

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FOREWORD

THOSE who read of Ireland, as well as those who write, would do well to bear in mind Wolfe Tone's description of his countrymen, which is as true to-day as when it was uttered—six generations ago, at the close of the eighteenth century. They were, he said, 'separate nations met and settled together, not mingled but convened; uncemented parts that do not cleave to each other'—and as it was in the Erin of Ninety-Eight, so it is in the Erin of to-day. Wolfe Tone, when he founded the society of United Irishmen, hoped not only to break free of British authority but 'to unite the whole country of Ireland, to abolish the memory of all past dissensions, and to substitute the common name of Irishman in place of Protestant, Catholic, Dissenter.' That hope has yet to be fulfilled. There is still a gulf, and a wide one, between those who hold to the Catholic faith and those who hold to the Protestant; nor have the passing years brought about forgetfulness of racial divisions and differences. The Celt, the Ulsterman of Scots or English blood, and the Anglo-Irish of the 'Middle Nation'—they are all reminiscent of their origin and, all too often, reminiscent of their ancient feuds. Nor is this wholly to be wondered at; there have been influences in Ireland, making for division, which happier nations have been spared. For several generations the ruling caste of the Anglo-Irish spoke a different language from that of the subordinate Celts, who were mostly peasants and small traders; and, more important still, the Anglo-Irish were of a different faith from the Celts, a Protestant

ascendency. Through generations, therefore, class, race, and religion combined in a formidable barrier to keep Irishmen apart. The alien in blood was doubly an alien because he was also a Protestant; the Catholic was not only a Catholic, he came of an inferior caste. If it had not been for this triple barrier; if religion had not been identified with caste and race, the two peoples, ere this, might have grown into one Irish: as Norman and Saxon, in the neighbouring island, were in due time absorbed into one English. . . . True it is that many who have espoused the cause of the Celtic Irishman have not been of Celtic ancestry — Wolfe Tone himself among the number; the names of many members of the Middle Nation are on the roll of those who have championed Irish freedom. But, for all their efforts and aspirations towards nationhood, they failed to abolish, in the mass of their countrymen, 'the memory of all past dissension' and bring Irishmen together in unity.

The people of Ireland, in our generation, have been sundered by a new line of division: a frontier to six of their counties. A frontier complete with customs dues and tariffs, whose existence, for the time being at any rate, means blank denial to the Nationalist hope, the Wolfe Tone hope, of an Ireland one and independent. 'The wickedest wrong the English have ever done the Irish'—so I once heard an ardent Republican denounce the setting up of the State of Northern Ireland, which she obviously thought that the British Government should have coerced into union with the Free State; and on another occasion it was explained to me, by one more reasonable and in milder terms, that Nationalist Ireland feels for her lost Six Counties as France once felt for

her lost Alsace and Lorraine. It may be so; but there seems at present to be this essential difference between Ulster as it is and Alsace-Lorraine as it was: the majority in the severed Irish province are well content to remain as they are, in separate estate and authority. What is more, they are likely to remain content so long as the declared policy of their neighbour state is that of the party at present in office; since the outstanding items of that policy are the abolition of the Oath of Allegiance and other constitutional safeguards and restrictions; the withholding of the Land Annuities and other payments to the British Treasury; and the use of the fiscal powers of the State so to exclude foreign manufactures and materials and so to develop the internal resources of the country, as to make it entirely self-supporting. This latter item in the Free State programme means, in practice, a stringency in protective tariff and reduction in the volume of over-sea trade which the industrial North is hardly likely to contemplate.

Yet another line of demarcation is that between those who are content that their country, the Free State, should remain a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations and those who will be satisfied with nothing less than an Irish Republic, in name as well as in fact; a republic in all things severed from the hereditary enemy, England, whom they teach their children to contemn. That division, in the past, meant the fratricidal strife of the 'Troubles'—its destruction of property, its ambushes and assassinations; as to what it may mean in the years to come, the wise prophet will not prophesy too definitely. This only can be stated with certainty, that, from certain sections of the Irish people, the demand

for a republic is loud and persistent; and that a modern idea concerning treaties and pacts appears to be that you break them as and when you find convenient. And in Ireland there is always Limerick to serve as an excuse for broken treaties. By the 'Violated Treaty' of 1691 Sarsfield surrendered Limerick to Ginkel on terms which a Williamite parliament subsequently refused to ratify; a breach of faith not forgotton by later generations.

. . . . . .

Our post-war period, when historians look back on it, will probably be classified as the age of national experiment. After the shattering breakdown of accustomed order that was one of the results of the catastrophe of war, national communities, one after the other, began to work out new theories of government and of economics. Dictatorships, black, red, and brown, took the place of the democracy for whose right and safety the dear blood of millions had been shed; and with dictatorship sprang up new forms of religion—in lieu of the Creator, man worshipped his multiplied self, as the Community, and the State was enthroned as a god.

Ireland also is trying her collective experiment—in that major portion of the island which is known as Saorstát Eireann, the Free State. Not in the way of religion; her experiment is economic, an attempt to attain to complete independence and sufficiency. The aim of those who promote it is a community dwelling beneath the Irish equivalent of its own vine and fig tree; clothing itself in the garments it has woven and spun; furnishing its houses with the work of its own craftsmen and factories; and heating itself with its own fuel—the power that it draws from its rivers and the

peat that it digs from its bogs. What they work for and dream of is a country in all things free of foreign interference; independent of the foreigner's money, of his trade, his political authority, his influence. A country that will deny itself superfluity, luxury, even much that elsewhere is classed as necessity, that it may live to itself alone! An exact reversal of the Free Trade ideal of Victorian England, which envisaged content and prosperity for the race as result of a constant process of exchange—a world-wide process of pushing commodities about. Other times and other places, other manners! To Cobden and Bright the world-wide pushing-about of commodities was almost a religious principle; while Eamon de Valera, in this present year of grace, pursues with a fervour equal to theirs his ideal of an Irishman who, from cradle to coffin, consumes nothing but Irish products.

In the matter of economic plan and experiment the Irish Free State has one advantage, one important advantage, over other states and peoples engaged in the same process: she is one of the smaller nations of the world—her entire population, of something over three million, is not half that of Greater London. Since experiment is a venture on paths untried, common sense enjoins that, where possible, it should be made upon a small scale; a failure affecting three millions of people is less disastrous, because easier to remedy, than a similar failure affecting large agglomerations of population like Soviet Russia or the United States of America.

Meanwhile, whatever the result, the process of experiment is worth watching.

1936. C. H.

I. FRONTIERS AND THE SMUGGLING INDUSTRY

In the autumn of 1935 the Ulster Farmers' Union issued a statement dealing with the smuggling of cattle from the Free State into Northern Ireland. According to this statement, the traffic is on the increase; so much so that smuggling is now a regular and well-organized business which, in the first nine months of 1935, handled contraband cattle to the number of nearly sixty thousand. The union estimates that the loss to the British Government in duty is about half a million a year. Nor is that all; once the transit from the Free State has been safely and secretly accomplished, the contraband beasts, in the guise of Northern cattle, will be entitled to a subsidy of five shillings a hundredweight.

No one who has recently sojourned on the frontier of the two Irish states will be greatly surprised by the Ulster Farmers' estimate; even the tourist, so he keeps his ears open, will discover for himself that the contraband business is established and taken for granted. Journeying from Sligo to Galway in a third-class carriage, I heard it discussed, with no attempt at secrecy, by a party of my fellow-passengers. Two of the party were acquaintances who had evidently run against each other on the wayside station where they joined the train; they began by inquiries after each other's welfare and each other's families, one of the objects of friendly curiosity being a brother, Dan—how was he doing nowadays? Brother Dan, it appeared, had nothing to complain of; on the contrary,

he was doing quite well with his cattle—getting a sale and good prices. How was that? Why, smuggling them, of course—sending them over the border.

The other party to the conversation was aware, like every one else, that smuggling was the one and only way to make good money with your beasts. Still, how did Dan manage to drive them and not get caught? Wasn't it a difficult business?

'Difficult!' The suggestion was jeered at. Nothing easier—it was all arranged for you. 'Twasn't you who drove the beasts across the frontier; you just handed them over to the smuggling men and the smuggling men did the rest. They knew all the roads and they knew all the tricks. . . . As I have said, there was no secrecy about that conversation. Dan's brother gave details of successful drives in a voice that resounded through the carriage; and as the carriage was of open corridor type, and the topic under discussion was of general interest, other of its occupants, including a priest, came along to listen and join in with sympathetic comment.

Contraband trade is the inevitable accompaniment of a high tariff, and our post-war world, being given to the erection of customs barriers and protective duties, has, by that fact, encouraged the smuggling industry. But though that industry nowadays flourishes all round the globe, I do not imagine there are many regions where it flourishes more luxuriantly than in Ireland. I read one day, in an Irish newspaper, that a member of the legislature, from his place in the Senate, had announced that his county (which marched with Northern Ireland) lived by its contraband trade. One takes it that the

statement is coloured by exaggeration; still, it is significant that such a statement could be made in such a place.

The reasons for this special vigour in contraband activity are manifold and also comprehensible. The customs barrier between Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State is more artificial than the majority of customs barriers; even to good loyalists who have no desire to see it thrown down there is something incongruous—even ridiculous—in this bar to intercourse between those who yesterday were neighbours and traded without let or hindrance. Between the South and the 'Black North' there exists a tradition of cleavage in matters religious and political but, where trade is concerned, the tradition is of unity. There is a frequent difficulty attendant on the drawing of frontiers; the line which is advantageous from a political or defensive point of view does not necessarily coincide with the interests of the trader—as likely as not it will cut across his natural channels. Derry, for instance, with its harbour on the Foyle, is the natural market and distributing centre for the neighbouring county of Donegal, and the same, on a smaller scale, is true of the inland market town of Strabane—till the drawing of the Free State frontier it dealt unrestricted in Donegal produce and sold to the Donegal farmer. Both sides suffer commercially, financially, from the barrier that has risen between them and deflected the age-long course and habit of their trade. Then, as a further incentive to the smuggler, there is the steep, the very steep, difference in prices. The cheapness and variety of foodstuffs and dress in the Six Counties, as compared with higher

cost and limited choice in the Free State; and, on the other hand, the superior price that the Six Counties will pay for cattle that fetch next to nothing in their native South. These factors in themselves would be more than sufficient to maintain the trade of the smuggler in a state of healthy, or unhealthy, activity; but there is a further stimulus, and a strong one, in the traditional Irish feud with the law and its minions. Opposition to the police, as representatives of the powers that be, if it is not in the blood of every Irishman, is in that of a fairly high percentage. While, as regards the trade in contraband cattle, there is this to be remembered in excuse: the Free State cattle farmer is the man above all others who bears the burden imposed by the economic war with England and Mr. de Valera's policy of a self-supporting Ireland. Mr. de Valera may, or may not, be wise in deciding to sacrifice the interests of the breeder of cattle to those of other sections of the Irish people; but even those Irishmen who hold that the sacrifice is right and necessary will hardly deny that it is heavy. His annuities demanded of him, and the trade with England which enabled him to pay them cut off, the farmer may (and sometimes does) find it impossible to keep his head above water by legitimate means. The obvious expedient, for those who can manage it, is to get into touch with the smuggling man and send their beasts across the border.

If you stay anywhere in the neighbourhood of the border you can hear smuggling stories in plenty; some, no doubt, just stories, but others authentic enough. A friend of my own, when strolling by the riverside, saw half a dozen cattle make an untaxed passage from

Donegal into Tyrone. The cattle, when first she saw them, were grazing lawfully, in charge of a lad, on the Donegal, the Free State, bank of the river; as she neared them, however, a man who had been lying doggo on the further, the Ulster, bank, rose from a clump of bushes and gave a loud whistle. This was evidently an all-clear signal, to which the man on the Free State side responded by rounding up his beasts, driving them into the river, and directing them across by the simple expedient of pelting them with stones and clods of earth till they headed for the opposite bank. There, as they landed, they were met by the Northerner, who drove them happily away; and likely enough they arrived in England shortly afterwards either as cattle or as beef, but in any case paying no duty! Unless a wall is built round the entire land frontier of Northern Ireland, or constables are stationed on its every few yards, it is difficult to see how such incidents as this can be prevented. The smuggler's game is so very well worth its candle.

There are tales (which may not be veracious but sound probable enough) of decoy raiders, equivalents of the legendary 'prison editors' of foreign newspapers, whose job it is to pay fines or even go to jail, and who will drive a small herd on a route where it is likely to attract the attention of frontier guards—so that while they are drawing the enemy's fire, a larger drove may cross the frontier unmolested. Report has it also that lorry-loads of cattle are conveyed from the South to the neighbourhood of the frontier and there decanted, in convenient readiness for the drive. One story told me with appreciation concerned the smuggling of a bull. When the deal between

its owner and the 'smuggling man' was concluded the moon was at the full and the weather clear; hence the bull's owner remarked to the drover, he supposed the actual crossing of the frontier would have to wait for the waning of the over-bright moon. Not at all, he was told, not at all—the beast would go over in broad daylight. As, in fact, it did, and with no attempt to stop it; the ingenious smuggler leading it openly along the road and then, at a convenient distance from the customs barrier, dropping the halter and goading the bull into a run. He himself having given it a start, pursued it at a distance which made capture impossible before the barrier was reached—shouting, as he ran, appeals to the official in charge of the barrier to stop his runaway beast! The said official, excusably enough, had no fancy for tackling an escaping bull; on the contrary, he hastily made way for it and the Free State bull made its entry into Ulster with the drover panting and shouting in its wake. Hardly needful to state that neither bull nor drover was seen again at the barrier.

A Donegal farmer was asked in my hearing about the 'subsidized' killing of calves—how many had been slaughtered in that neighbourhood? In reply he laughed and said that was a question that had better not be asked, but there wasn't much calf-killing in those parts. The inference being that calves, instead of being slaughtered in accordance with Free State regulation, as was done in districts further from the border, were habitually and profitably smuggled. Some idea of the temptation to live-stock smuggling may be obtained from the same farmer's statement that the duty on pigs entering Northern Ireland was £1 per hundred-

weight. For a time the Free State Government assisted the pig-breeder by a subsidy of six shillings a hundredweight, which went towards payment of the duty; but even so, fourteen shillings a hundredweight remained to be paid by the exporter. And even that assistance has now been withdrawn; the full weight of the duty falls on the exporter—is it to be wondered that he smuggles? . . . It was this Donegal farmer who told me that the sum he has to pay as a land annuitant is about £4; but that since the beginning of the economic war the cost to him in raised customs duties—his natural market being over the border—has been £4 many times over!

Cattle smuggling, of course, is from the Free State Ulsterwards, but plenty of contraband goes in the other direction; as regards articles in everyday use—food, small commodities, and wearing apparel—the temptation is all to smuggle southward. It is not only that prices are higher in the Free State, sometimes astonishingly higher;[1] quality is often lower, while goods that are plentiful enough in the Six Counties may be scarce beyond the frontier—scarce and even unobtainable. As I have never been a wholehearted adherent of Free Trade there is nothing against my principles in the economic policy of Ireland's present rulers, which aims at the creation of an Ireland producing all that she needs and living by her own wealth and work. All the same it is obvious

[1] 'Everything is taxed—butter, tea, sugar, boots, shoes, and clothes—to an oppressive degree. Why should a man in Clones pay 1*s.* 5*d.* per pound for butter which another man got for 10*d.* three miles away?' This question was put by one of the speakers at a conference, held in Dublin, of the Methodist Church in Ireland. Where there are discrepancies of this kind the smuggling of food is inevitable.

that the change in methods of supply and manufacture, if made abruptly—as it is being made in the Irish Free State—is bound, in the case of a good many commodities, to entail not only high prices but inferiority of workmanship. Which means, of course, temptation to smuggle the better and cheaper article.

To take one instance: If you live on the Six County side of the frontier you can buy, as you can in England, varieties of excellent cheese, Cheddars, English and colonial, Dutch, Gruyère, and the like; while a mile or two away, in a Free State shop, you will be restricted to the home-made product of the country. This, no doubt, will improve with time and practice, but at present (I state the fact with regret) it is not to be pressed upon those who have known better things. One would have thought that Ireland, a dairy-farming country, could have turned out cheese on a par with its excellent butter—but so it is not; and personally, being addicted to bread-and-cheese lunches on my travels, I found the lack of good ordinary cheese a distinct deprivation and drawback. Non-Irish cheese is obtainable in Dublin, at any rate in better-class shops; but in what is supposed to be the best hotel in Limerick there was nothing but the home-manufactured article—and being already acquainted with same, I rejected it without further trial.

Even as regards its roses and its violets the Free State aims at being self-supporting. You cannot bring a bunch of flowers across the border untaxed, while there is, of course, a duty, a heavy one, on fruit and vegetables. I was told of a woman, a Free State resident, who crossed the frontier to attend a sale of work for some charitable object and was misguided enough to make several pur-

chases at the garden-produce stall, including a gigantic marrow. Being a new-comer to the frontier district, she had not realized that the customs would demand from her one shilling per pound of its weight—and the weight of that imposing marrow was somewhere about eighteen pounds. Sweets—chocolates and the like—are also on the contraband list; the Free State nowadays has its own factories whose products the alien must not oust.

There is a heavy scale of penalty for those detected in evasion. I stayed in one district where an example had recently been made. A girl whose parents lived just inside the Free State was caught by its customs officials with a dress of Six County origin tucked somewhere away in her car. The garment in question was an inexpensive piece of goods of the eighteen and elevenpenny order; nevertheless the father of the smuggler was mulcted in a fine of a hundred pounds. Spite threat and risk of penalty, however, if only half one hears is true there is a brisk trade in contraband garments; I have been told of one or two ingenious methods whereby they are conveyed across the border-line unmarked, but such disclosures, naturally, have been made in the strictest of confidence. Common property, however, is the story of the Free State citizen who, having occasion to journey into Northern Ireland, made the trip in an ancient, disreputable suit, purchased its successor at a Belfast outfitter's and, on the return journey, changed his clothes in the train, intending (lest official suspicion be aroused) to throw away the old coat and trousers before reaching the customs at Dundalk. Unluckily he started the throwing-away process before the change was complete, and arrived at Dundalk minus nether garments, having,

by mistake, hurled both pairs of trousers through the window!

(Here let me say that Ireland is no exception to the rule that customs officers deal kindly with the tourist. I have been backwards and forwards over a good many European frontiers in the course of the last few years and never yet come in contact with officials who made any trouble about personal possessions; the tourist is everywhere a welcome animal and nobody wants to frighten him away by over-strict search and regulation. Certainly not in Ireland, where, if my experience is any guide, they breed a most friendly race of customs officials.)

. . . . . .

If you travel on the frontier of East Prussia and Poland — the 'Corridor' frontier — and have any German acquaintance in the neighbourhood, the chances are that your attention will be drawn to the incongruities of the post-war border-line and the hardships resulting therefrom. It will be pointed out to you that property in farmland or garden is sometimes cut in half by the line; you will be shown where it acts as a barrier to the trade route of the Vistula. Such incongruities and hardships, however, are not peculiar to the East Prussian border; they are the inevitable accompaniment of every new frontier and can be found by the dozen on the line that marks off Northern Ireland from the Free State. A farm has been pointed out to me which is cut in two by the frontier-line and where the owner, domiciled in County Derry, has live stock grazing in County Donegal and cannot bring them up to his Derry farmstead without incurring customs dues. I had tea one

afternoon at a house on the border whose owner was forbidden to make use of his own front gate; what had been intended for the back or kitchen entrance being now the only method of approach. The reason being that, though the house itself is situate in County Fermanagh—one of the Six Counties—its front gate opens on a stretch of no-man's-land between the two custom houses; thus any one coming from the Free State and making use of the front gate and its drive could enter the house without scrutiny from the Northern customs. The back gate, on the other hand, is just beyond the barrier—and so the obligatory entrance.

One of the minor inconveniences of the frontier is the facility it offers for straying across it unwittingly. There are certain authorized roads by which alone cars are legally entitled to pass from one state to another; but in addition to these there are minor roads and lanes by which a driver who is not acquainted with the district may easily take his car across a frontier without obtaining the necessary permissive stamps. An error of that kind, however unintentional, may mean hold-up, fuss, and bother.

On the line that runs from Dublin to Belfast and Derry, the first station in Northern Ireland is Goraghwood; but well before the train reaches Goraghwood the passenger who faces the engine and looks out to the right can make sure that he has crossed the border. For from the top of a tree, and a good, tall tree, there flies the Union Jack, as token of welcome to returning loyalists and sign of 'No Surrender!' to the South. Since I passed it several times, at intervals of weeks, I conclude it is a permanent feature of the landscape.

All the same, it would not surprise me to learn that the sign and symbol of British rule was now and then missing from its tree-top of a morning—hauled down in the night by some adherent of the opposite faction. Once I travelled to Belfast in the company of some Dublin excursionists, and there was quite a stir in the carriage when one of them sighted the tree and its flag and drew the attention of the rest. 'Ooh—look!' she exclaimed. 'There's the Union Jack!'—and the whole party turned to the window and gazed at the unfamiliar sight. I was more than half expectant of uncomplimentary remark, but none came. The only audible comment was: 'That shows we're over the frontier.'

II. THE ECONOMIC WAR AND THE CATTLE FARMER

IN the *Cork Examiner* of May 28, 1935, was published a news item which throws a sidelight on the agricultural policy of Fianna Fail and the economic war with England. It was headed 'Seized Stock,' and runs as follows:

'The seventh sale of cattle seized for non-payment of land annuities took place in the pound of the old Fermoy military barracks yesterday afternoon.

'The usual precautions were taken by the authorities, a number of armed members of the Gardai [1] guarding the entrances to the barracks. The proceedings occupied only a short time.

'The first lot put up were two horses, thirty-seven sheep, and twenty-four lambs, seized from Daniel Cashman, Francistown, Castlelyons, on foot of a decree and expenses totalling £33 10*s.* 10*d.* The auctioneer refused a request from Mr. Cashman that the horses be sold separately, and invited bids for the entire lot. The only bid forthcoming was from a buyer who gave his name as "Mr. Cash," and he purchased the lot with his first offer of £15. The same man purchased fourteen head of cattle, seized from Denis Twomey, Glanmire, on foot of a debt of £35 14*s.*, for £15, and nineteen head of cattle seized from William J. Fahy, Desertmore, Ovens, on foot of a debt of £40 9*s.* 10*d.*, for £20.

'The last lot offered for sale was a Ford saloon motor-car, seized from Anastasia O'Callaghan, Maglin House,

[1] The police.

Ballincollig, on foot of a decree for £45 17*s.* 2*d.* "Mr. Cash" opened the bidding with £5, and a member of the general public increased it to £6. Two more bids from the same pair at £8 and £10 followed and the "Mr. Cash" raised the figure to £15, at which price he was declared the purchaser. The car appeared to be in excellent condition and was taxed to the end of the year.'

On May 27, 1935, it happened that I was in the town of Fermoy and so enabled to witness the cattle sale reported above. The old barracks, wherein it took place, are a relic of pre-treaty days when British regiments were quartered in Ireland and Fermoy was a garrison town. (There is a story—for its correctness I do not vouch—that when the Saxon oppressor had marched out of the barracks, the inhabitants of Fermoy approached the Government with a request for compensation for loss of the military custom which had put good money in their pockets.)

The barracks to-day are barracks merely in name; they were burnt out years ago and have never been rebuilt. The British garrison, when it took its departure, left them whole and sound; it was in the subsequent 'Troubles' of the civil war that they were fired and gutted by one or other of the parties to the Irish conflict. Of the buildings that once housed the garrison there remains no more than a roofless shell, but the outer wall still stands undamaged and within its enclosure the sale took place and the confiscated beasts were herded. Nowadays, I was informed, they are always brought from their place of seizure in lorries driven and guarded by police; it had been found impossible to drive them along the roads to their

destination as (the hand of every farmer being 'agin the Government') the gate of every farmer whose land adjoined the road was left open as wide as it would go. Result, continual divergence of cattle and sheep from the path they were intended to tread; such divergence necessitating continual rounding-up and consequent delay on the part of the harassed drovers.

Nominally, of course, these sales are public proceedings; actually at Fermoy there was careful precaution—which it may be was necessary—against an influx of the public. The Gardai in charge were taking no risks; there was no chance of a repetition of the 'protest' of the previous August, when a lorry manned by Blue Shirts dashed into the sales-yard and a young man was shot by the police. The main barrack-gates were both closed and guarded; entry was made only by a small side door which a member of the Gardai held just wide enough to permit of the passing of one person at a time—the passing and also the scrutiny. It was market day in Fermoy, which meant the presence of a good many farmers in the town; and as the hour of sale approached, a contingent from the market-place came up to the barracks and were duly and singly admitted. I realized there would be no woman on the ground to keep me company, and the constable looked both amused and astonished when I walked up to his door. I introduced myself as a journalist from London and asked if I might go in and see the sale. To which the guardian of the door responded by a shake of the finger and the warning remark: 'You 're going to be quiet, now? You 're not going to give trouble?' I asked him, in reply, if I looked the sort of person to start rioting;

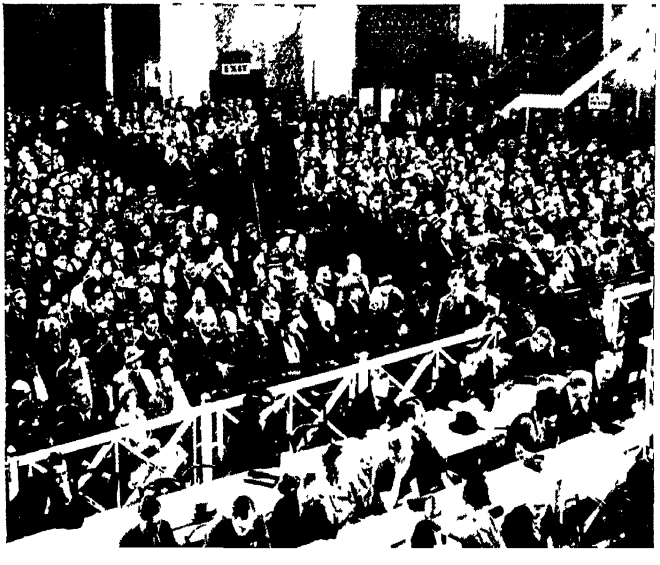
and if I did show signs of it, couldn't he and the other big constables take me and throw me out? On this I was passed in without more ado and waved in the direction of the sales-ground.

Precautions, however, did not end at the barrack-gate; the sales-ground itself was fenced off by a railing and guarded even more stringently than the first line of defence. A squad of Gardai stood just inside the gate, and the sentry outside it, who was armed with a rifle, told me he could not allow me to pass without reference to an inspector who had not yet arrived on the scene. When he did arrive no further difficulty was made; the constable who approached him with my request returned to pass me into the enclosure, where sullen groups of farmers, for the most part silent, stood looking at the confiscated beasts. A few minutes later a car drove up with the auctioneer, he and his clerk came into the enclosure, and the sale began. Before beginning it the auctioneer announced that his instructions were to sell the beasts from each farm in one lot. The owner of the first lot begged in vain that his two horses should be put up separately, as then he could afford to buy them in—the refusal was abrupt and absolute. His thirty-seven sheep, his twenty-four lambs, his two horses went for fifteen pounds—leaving him eighteen pounds in debt!

The 'buyer who gave his name as "Mr. Cash" ' was not on the ground to make his bid in person; in each case that afternoon his offer was announced and his name given by the auctioneer's clerk. Whatever the name of the buyer on these occasions it is usually printed in inverted commas by the papers reporting the

A O'Keeffe

AFTER THE CATTLE SALE, FERMOY



sale, and there is, I think, no attempt to disguise his fictitious character; 'Mr. Cash' and the other pseudonymous gentlemen who pick up their bargains at these sales of seized cattle are the agents whereby the Free State Government disposes of its own confiscations. As can be seen by turning back to the extract quoted, in every case that afternoon the price paid by 'Mr. Cash' for his acquisitions left their previous owner still saddled with a load of debt—varying in amount from eighteen pounds to thirty.

I wondered, as I stood and watched the proceedings, if the men whose goods were sold by order of their Government gave a thought to the irony of their actual surroundings; to the grim jest of holding the sale in the shadow of a ruined British barrack. Here once was established a stronghold of that British tyranny which was the only obstacle to Ireland's welfare and content; the roofless walls, the eyeless windows, are sign and token of its overthrow. And yet . . .

Even after the lapse of several months I find it difficult to think of that sale unemotionally. It was not only the pitiful prices obtained for the beasts; that is to say, for the labour and skill, the time and the money their unfortunate owners had expended on them and their keep. There was also the attitude of the spectators of the sale; the company of farmers who had come up the hill from Fermoy market, who stood in silence while the auctioneer sold to 'Mr. Cash'; and who, when the lots had been duly disposed of, tramped away in silence, past the armed police and down the road. (There is a photograph, facing this page, of some of them leaving the barracks.) Mr. de Valera's farming policy is a

matter for himself and the Irishmen who place him in power; its wisdom or unwisdom is no concern of ours. But even those Irishmen most firmly convinced of its wisdom and righteousness would hardly, I think, have looked unmoved on those downcast farmers of Fermoy.

The woes of rural Ireland, in years gone by, were laid to the account of alien rule, and the maladministration and greed of the landlord. To-day rural Ireland is finding out that Irish authority can be as rigid as alien in enforcement of the law and that it is not only the absentee landlord whose hand can lie heavy on the farmer. And in this connection it is permissible, I think, to quote[1] the remarks made, in the course of a debate in the Dail, by an Opposition deputy, Mr. Dillon; remembering always that he is an Opposition deputy, making out a case against the Government—and remembering also that Irish debate does not err on the side of moderation. After suggesting that it would make a cat sick to hear a previous orator making 'a rambling statement about what happened fifty years ago,' Mr. Dillon went on to ask why the said orator did not get up and say one word in defence of the farmer. 'Why had the deputy not the courage to say a word about the eighty head of cattle which were taken into Fermoy the other day, sold for £90 to a Government agent and then taken by that agent to Belfast, where they were sold for £725 which went to line the pockets of the Government's agent? And every deputy of the Fianna Fail party who stood for action of that kind was a disgrace to the country and deserving of the censure

[1] *Irish Times*, June 6, 1935.

of every decent man. These farmers were being robbed under the cloak of legality by the Minister for Lands. . . . God help this country that it had not to-day the type of men it had during the land war of fifty years ago. If they had such men to-day, the thing would not last three months, let alone three years.' . . . He wanted to know from the Minister for Lands if he stood over this legalized robbery. Even the worst of the landlords, like Clanricarde and Barrymore, never treated their tenants with the savagery and inhumanity with which the minister was treating the tenant farmers to-day. There was no use for the minister to close his eyes to the fact that if he was to take up the role of an evicting landlord in any area of the country the Land League spirit was going to be revived. . . . To his mind no bigger catastrophe than that could happen to the country. He suggested that, instead of sending out the sheriff and bailiffs to the houses of men who were unable to pay, the minister should proceed for recovery of the annuities by the ordinary processes of law, where the people were able to pay. . . . Other Opposition deputies followed in the same vein, one of them backing up Mr. Dillon by declaring that 'the Government now, as the one big landlord, had a great deal more power and was a great deal more ruthless than some of the landlords in those far-off days.' . . .

The above, I repeat, are partisan statements, attacks by political Outs on political Ins; it is only fair to add that I have been told by supporters of Fianna Fail that discretion is usually exercised in the matter of distraint; the men whose cattle are seized being those who could pay if they would. Still, even staunch supporters of the

Government do admit the existence of hard cases; and in parts of the South there can be no doubt the cases have been hard enough to rouse bitter resentment amongst the farming community.

. . . . . .

Some weeks after the sale I have described there was a protest of women at Fermoy barracks. The women concerned were farmers' wives and daughters, and they made their protest in a style reminiscent of the suffrage 'deputations' of times past. I quote again from the *Cork Examiner*—for July 13, 1935:

'Wild and exciting scenes were witnessed in Fermoy yesterday when, at the nineteenth sale of seized stock in the Military Barracks . . . some four hundred women came into conflict with a force of Civic Guards, with whom they waged an almost continual battle for an hour and forty minutes. Using eggs, stones, coats, hats, and even handbags as impromptu methods of attack, the women kept up running offensives before, during, and after the sale of seized stock which took place behind the closed gates of the barracks whilst guards maintained a defensive cordon across the street just outside the barrack entrance.'

The protest had evidently been thought out beforehand, for the attacking force had come provided with banners; one of them bearing the legend 'Up with the Farmers' and others that of 'Down with Breen'—Breen being the official auctioneer. The women (who hailed from all parts of County Cork) first assembled in the town and then marched to the barrack-gate. There they demanded admission, on the ground that the sale was

public; and, being refused, hostilities were promptly opened.

'There followed some wild minutes. . . . One guard who shouted "Keep back!" was heatedly answered by a woman. "We cannot keep back," she said, "when we are being robbed left, right, and centre by the bums. All our lives we have been slaving and working, and now it 's all gone!" '

Considering the number engaged and the length of the struggle—an hour and forty minutes—the casualties incurred by the combatants were slight. There is no mention of any medical treatment for the guards, while only one young woman was sufficiently damaged to need removal to hospital—and even her injuries do not appear to have been serious. This lack of bloodshed, one may guess, was due in part to the reluctance of the police to use violence against women, and, for the rest, to the nature of the weapons employed by their assailants. The policeman who was beaten with a coat or a handbag may have been annoyed but was unlikely to sustain much injury; stones, it is true, were used now and then, but the popular projectile was the egg!

'The first attack with these missiles took guards and pressmen by surprise and they scattered. Many uniforms, however, were liberally bespattered with rotten eggs.'

When the supply of odoriferous ammunition ran out:

'Scouts were dispatched to the town where supplies of fresh eggs were secured. . . . The guards now presented a dishevelled appearance, the majority of them being covered with dust.'

Dust was also used by the women as a weapon, being gathered up and flung at the police; and as in addition

to dust, 'the fronts of many tunics were saturated with the yolks and whites of eggs,' the guards, when the fray was over, must have needed a drastic clean-up. Though the assailants were obviously in deadly earnest, there were humorous interludes, raising laughter on both sides, when a group of girls sang parodies of popular songs—one of them running:

Roll along, seizure wagon, roll along!

Despite these humorous interludes, however, the struggle in the end was sufficiently angry—the stone-throwing sufficiently heavy—to call for determined efforts to disperse the crowd. Batons were drawn and charges made and several young women were arrested. There was determined resistance on the part of themselves and their friends, but the weight and discipline of the police prevailed and the barrack-gates closed upon the prisoners. The remaining demonstrators refused to go away and demanded their release and, in the end, this was granted —after a parley between the police superintendent and the local member, Mr. P. Daly, T.D. The police, no doubt, were thankful to be rid of their captives, and the jail-delivery seems to have brought the actual rioting to an end; the women, having got their way in the matter of the prisoners, marched away, as they had come, in processional formation to hold a protest meeting in the town. This was addressed by Mr. Daly, who, in the course of his speech, expressed the thanks of the meeting to the shopkeepers of Fermoy who had closed their shops in token of sympathy with the plight of the farming community.

The demonstration outside the barracks seems to have

had no effect on the proceedings within; the sale of seized cattle was carried on as usual, the buyer in this case being known as 'Andrews'—in the usual inverted commas. Judging by the newspaper account of his transactions, he seems to have done even better with his bargains than his colleague and predecessor 'Cash.' One lot of twenty-four cattle was knocked down to him for £15; as the annuity arrears of their former owner amounted to over £95, he was left—minus his property in cattle—with £80 still owing!

. . . . . .

On the dispute that gave rise to the economic war—the right of the British Government to demand the Land Annuities, the right of the Free State Government to divert them to its own uses—on that vexed question I offer no opinion.[1] It is a question that could doubtless be argued to settlement before a legal tribunal; but as the British Government insists on one form of tribunal and the Free State Government on another, it seems likely to remain undecided. Mr. de Valera's case he has stated many times in his own country, but on this side the Irish Sea we hear it less often; hence it may be of interest to quote (from the *Irish Times*) an election speech on the subject which he made in June 1935:

'The first of the prevalent misconceptions, Mr. de Valera said, was that the moneys with which the Irish tenant farmers purchased their holdings were lent to them by certain members of the community here and

[1] The Land Annuities represent interest and sinking fund on a capital of about £90,000,000, advanced to Irish farmers (by British bondholders) for the purchase of their land.

in Britain. The second was that it was the Government of Great Britain which had advanced the money to the Irish farmers; that it was, accordingly, to the Government of Great Britain that the land annuities naturally were due and that the Government, therefore, in collecting the land annuities and withholding them from Britain, was misappropriating money which belonged to another State.

'With regard to the first question, he said that it was absolute nonsense to pretend that the land-stock holders had lent their money to the Irish farmers. The land-stock holders would not have advanced a shilling to the Irish farmers. The land-stock holders had subscribed their money to a loan issued by the Government of the then United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. He wanted them constantly to bear in mind the importance of the word "Ireland" in the title. On the credit of Ireland, as well as that of Great Britain, those loans had been obtained and had been ultimately secured on the revenues from Ireland no less than from those of Great Britain. It was not to the Irish farmers, then, that the land-stock holders lent their money, nor had they any right to look to them for repayment or for dividends. The Irish farmer owed no debt to the stockholders. If a housewife gets her tea on credit from her grocer, she owes a debt to her grocer, not to the tea-planter. The Irish farmer has no contractual or moral obligation of any kind to the stockholders.

' "If you are clear on this point—and I feel sure you are—you surely see the humbug of talking about the retention of the land annuities by our State as 'defrauding the stockholders.' The Irish farmer's obligation lay

originally to the State that advanced him the money, and that State, as I have said, was the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland."

'The United Kingdom had been involved in a dual transaction. That State incurred, on the one hand, an obligation which it had to meet, no matter how or whence it got the wherewithal. On the other hand it was entitled to receive payment of a debt which it could remit or dispose of as the Parliament of the State might choose to determine.

'That was the position when the Government of Ireland Act was passed on December 23, 1920. . . . Each of the Irish States (that is to say, the Free State and Northern Ireland) was to collect from the farmers in its own area the annuities due to the old United Kingdom, and each of these States was given the right to retain the moneys so collected for its own purposes.

'On the other hand, with equal definiteness, the Parliament of the United Kingdom transferred to the third of the three States into which (as he might say) the partnership of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was separated, and placed on that State's shoulder alone the responsibility of providing for meeting the old United Kingdom's obligation to the land-stock holders. Thus the obligation was transferred to Great Britain.

' "When the Act of 1920 became law this became the position, we contend, on the day when the treaty of 1921 was signed—the Act, I repeat, "gifted" the land annuities to Ireland and transferred the burden of obligation . . . to Great Britain alone." '

That, in brief, is Mr. de Valera's case for withholding the land annuities from the British Government; a case

which he backed by allusions to certain legal decisions, and to the subsequent treaty of 1925, which it would be superfluous to quote in these pages. To the English mind there appears to be a bit of 'Heads I win and tails you lose!' about the Irish position; and it is obvious that the arrangement was not so interpreted by the British Government when it set its seal to the treaty of 1921; nor was it so interpreted on the Irish side until Fianna Fail came to power. With reference to these previous payments, Mr. de Valera (in the speech above quoted) declared that, on the Irish side, there had been a belief that this was merely a stop-gap arrangement: 'That the annuities were being paid over on some sort of an understanding . . . provisionally, until the final financial adjustment should be made.'

It is possible that Mr. de Valera's case has its justification in law as well as in the judgment of those who are ever mindful of old grievance against British authority. The only certainty in the economic war to which the dispute has given rise is that the Irish cattle farmer is the man who pays most of its costs; the British Government, by its imposition of duties on Irish produce, having recouped itself for the loss of the annuities which the Irish Government has transferred to its own pocket. It must be noted, however, that (owing to the increase in arrears) the amount so transferred has not come up to expectations; according to *United Ireland*—an Opposition organ—although, under a Land Act of 1933, only half the former annuities are being demanded, yet 'the financial position of the farmer has been so undermined by the effects of the economic war that at the end of four months there was an arrear almost as large as had

accumulated during the forty years previous to the advent of Fianna Fail.' The arrears for the previous forty years are given as £416,126; whereas, in 1934, £363,951 had accumulated in the space of four months, and a year later sixteen months' arrears had mounted to £880,690. . . . There can be little doubt that, when Mr. de Valera first announced his intention of holding on to the annuities, the majority of Irish farmers believed that the money thus saved for Ireland would remain in their own pockets—and it may be that their readiness to appropriate the dues of a creditor country was not particularly honest. But if this was the case—if their intentions in the matter were not strictly honourable—their offence has often been visited with heavy penalties.

How far the illegal traffic in cattle has recouped the farmer for the loss of his legal English market, it is, of course, impossible to ascertain with any degree of accuracy; the Ulster Farmers' estimate (given in the previous chapter) is probably something of a guess, since contraband traders, working in the dark, are not in the habit of publishing their prices and balance-sheets. And though the profits of successful smuggling are likely to be large, it must be remembered that they do not only go to the Free State farmer; the drover—the smuggling man—also takes his share, and I have heard it rumoured that his share is sometimes the lion's. Even so, however (judging by the talk I heard in the train [1]), the farmer with facilities for smuggling will make a living, in many instances a good one; and it is not, I imagine, a mere coincidence that County Cork, furthest from the Northern frontier, is the county where farming discontent has been

[1] See previous chapter.

angriest and seizure of cattle most frequent. While it was in Cork City that there took place the affray between police and Blue Shirts to which I have already alluded and which ended tragically with the shooting of a young man, Michael Patrick Lynch. The circumstances will probably be remembered, as, even in England, they created considerable stir; how, when a sale of seized cattle was proceeding behind the closed gates of Marsh's auction yard, a lorry, manned by farmers, was driven full tilt at the gate and crashed through it into the yard. The men in the lorry were none of them armed, but the Gardai were taking no chances; they promptly opened fire, with the result that the lad Lynch was killed. His death roused fierce indignation in the district; not only by reason of the over-swift shooting of 'Broy's Harriers'[1] but because it was held that the men were within their rights in breaking down the gate of the auction yard—by law the sale was public and the guards had no right to exclude them. Even the Catholic Bishop of Cork was moved to public criticism alike of the guards and of the Government. The guards, he declared, had 'deliberately fired at these unarmed men when there was no question of danger,' thereby killing a boy who was not even a member of the lorry party; and the Government, whose agents they were, had made no attempt to compensate the father and mother of the lad. The bishop went on to say that, whatever the sins of England against Ireland, there was much to be learned from English methods of government; in England, 'if a grave injury like this were committed, even by mishap, reparation would be made.' . . . Tributes to British rule

[1] Colonel Broy is the chief of the Irish police.

are so infrequent in Ireland that this one seems worth recording.

. . . . . .

In the west and south of the Irish Free State it has happened more than once that complete strangers—acquaintance made in shops or inns or trains—on learning I was English have asked me point blank if, over in England, we were feeling the economic war. And the question, as a rule, was put so anxiously that I found it in my heart to regret the truth that must be told: that our public in general was little concerned and less troubled by the Irish dispute. To most of us it made little difference whether the bacon we ate for our breakfast hailed from Limerick, from Wiltshire, or from Denmark; whether our beef was raised in County Tipperary or the Argentine. . . . Once, in a small eating-house in County Galway, I fell into conversation with a local tradesman, a provision merchant, who, judging by his talk, had reasons of his own for wishing an end to the economic war with England; I guessed that the local farmers, hit by the 'war,' were leaving their grocers' bills unpaid. He asked me the usual question and I gave the usual answer; which, I gathered, was much what he expected. His depressed comment on the situation was that there was too much politics mixed up with business—your neighbours, whether you liked them or not, were your best customers and it was a pity people think of that! [1]

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the

[1] In 1934 Irish exports were lower by nearly £26,000,000 than they were in 1930; Irish imports lower by £18,000,000.

annuities dispute with the British Government is the sole cause of the distress prevailing in the Irish cattle trade; that distress, in part, is a result of deliberate policy. One of the avowed objects of the de Valera Government is to increase the area of Irish land under crops and make a corresponding decrease in the area given over to cattle. This change-over from stock-raising to corn-growing, from large farms to small holdings, is one of the developments of the Sinn Fein idea—the policy of making Ireland in all things self-supporting, in all things independent of the foreigner. In pursuance of that policy, she is to provide her daily bread from her own fields, instead of obtaining it in exchange for her export of cattle. The economic war has made an opportunity for speeding up this necessary change; it was impossible (so much was admitted by an official informant) to carry it through without inflicting hardship on sections of the farming community; that, of course, was regrettable, but the eventual good of the country as a whole must be the first consideration. Ireland, living to herself on her own products, will not require so many herds of cattle as Ireland living largely by trade with the neighbouring island; hence the right and wise policy is to reduce the area at present devoted to stock-raising —and incidentally the size of the average farm. Grazing means the ownership of many acres, whereas crops can be raised on a few.

In the *Saorstát Eireann Official Handbook,* published in 1932, the section devoted to agriculture gives the following figures: 'There are in the whole of Ireland nearly five million cattle, and in the Irish Free State about four million. There are available for slaughter each

year about a million cattle, of which about 850,000 are exported. The total gross annual output of agricultural produce in the Irish Free State is valued at about £65,000,000. Of this, live stock, and live stock products other than milk, are valued for about £37,000,000. The live stock industry is, therefore, by far the most important source of agricultural revenue.' These figures are sufficiently explanatory of the present inconvenience —to put it no more strongly—of a rapid change-over to wheat.

It would be presumption in a stranger, with no knowledge of agriculture, to venture an opinion on the wisdom or otherwise of Fianna Fail's policy of substituting tillage for cattle-raising. One can but record the varying views of those who are for and those who are against; remembering that, in each case, they are liable to be coloured by politics, sometimes by fanatical politics. By the opponents of the wheat-growing schemes it is argued, in the first place, that it is folly to destroy a flourishing industry that for years past has proved its value to the country for a problematical source of prosperity in wheat. They maintain further that the rich Irish grasslands (such as those in Meath and the 'Golden Vein' of Tipperary), which raise some of the best horses and cattle in the world, would raise but indifferent wheat; the very fatness of the soil is a disadvantage, producing an over-long stalk which bends to the weather.

On the other hand the area under tillage has of late considerably increased, and the idea that good Irish soil is unsuited to wheat is scouted by supporters of the policy. They point out that Ireland in the past grew more grain and that it was only as her grain was driven

out of the market by foreign competition that tillage was more and more ousted by stock-raising. Official posters on hoardings and railway stations urge farmers to the growing of wheat by reminding them their price is guaranteed by the Government; and, according to the Minister for Agriculture, in the first year of the new land policy—1932 to 1933—the area under wheat increased from twenty-two thousand to fifty-two thousand acres. 'There is one really significant thing about this wheat policy,' he declared, speaking in the Dail, 'and that is that we have demonstrated once and for all . . . that wheat can grow and has been grown in this country. . . . Wheat can be grown to advantage and with profit to those who have undertaken it under this scheme. The fact that after one year's trial of the scheme we have at least doubled our acreage is sufficient to show that the farming community, at any rate, believe in this scheme of wheat-growing. If this policy had been adopted when it was first advocated, say, six years ago' (this speech was made in 1934), 'it is quite possible that we might have reached the growing of practically our full requirements.'

In a recent publication one of the supporters of Fianna Fail's policy of economic independence [1] has summarized its objects and its motives as follows:

'The economic reconstruction of the country has two objectives, both virtually covered by de Valera's phrase: "No longer shall our children be brought up like our cattle for export." (1) Ireland must never again be in a position where a hostile England could exercise the present pressure, and de Valera argues that, in such a

[1] The Hon. Frank Pakenham.

case, no market may be better than one. (2) The rest of his economics takes as its criterion "employment" rather than "free consumer's choice," a substitution of which the subsidized change-over from pasture to tillage will be symbolical. His ideal is a community from which emigration will no longer be attractive, as it was up to 1932, and whose population will be steadily rising instead of uniquely and discreditably falling.

'Talk of unbalanced budgets . . . must not obscure the vision. De Valera is engaged on something fundamental here. He starts from a single postulate about physical fact. Suppose Ireland's trade were completely obliterated, Ireland could still feed herself and provide herself with the poor man's comforts. Her essential imports are very small now, but some coal could hardly be dispensed with, and this and a few other raw materials could be paid for in the last resort out of interest on overseas investments.'

Mr. Pakenham goes on to say that de Valera believes that guaranteed opportunities for Irish capital and the protection of infant industries by tariffs 'will allow private profit to emerge in widespread new directions, and hence supply the driving force for the establishment of what is to be an economy of small capitalists.' . . . An Ireland of small capitalists and increasing population: an Ireland producing all that it needs, free from dependence on British trade, and for ever free from British interference—that is the Ireland that Eamon de Valera hopes for and plans! . . . And that being so, his lack of sympathy for the farmers dependent on the English cattle market is comprehensible enough.

Whether it is possible nowadays to induce a race that

is Western and civilized to accept permanently the restrictions on freedom and low standard of comfort that must inevitably accompany complete economic independence—that is a question which only time can answer. To those bred in orthodox traditions of international trade the success of the experiment may seem doubtful as well as undesirable; but even if the years should prove them right, there is this they should remember in justice to those who dream of an Ireland in all things self-supporting. Under the old system of the pre-industrial era, England, like every other country possessed of colonies and dependencies, regulated the trade of those colonies and dependencies in the interests of her own industry. As in New England and Virginia, so in Ireland, she demanded monopoly of markets and hampered or forbade the export of manufactured goods that competed with her own products. At the end of the seventeenth century the Irish wool trade was crippled, of set purpose, by the English Parliament; it was not until 1780 that the free export of woollen manufactures was permitted—as one of the results of the Volunteer movement, which had received an impetus from successful revolt in America. And, by a bitter irony of fate, it was ordained that the adoption of Free Trade by the British Parliament should be even more disastrous to Ireland than the old system of protection and monopoly. 'There had been famines in the eighteenth century, for example, the terrible famine of 1740, and Ireland survived them. She could also have survived the famine of 1846, awful as it was. She was, however, unable to survive the famine as well as the coming of Free Trade. It was that measure which really gave the

coup de grâce to her agricultural prosperity for a couple of generations.' [1] It was Free Trade that substituted grazing for tillage over large tracts of Ireland and accounted for the 'ranches' which Fianna Fail is now endeavouring to abolish, for the simple reason that Irish corn, from that time on, was undersold by the product of American prairies. And it was Free Trade, not only the famine, that sent Irishmen, by the million, across the Atlantic. Ireland of the forties was populated far beyond her resources and the decline in her numbers of the next few decades in the end was a benefit to the country; but it was thanks to the introduction of Free Trade that Irish emigration was a matter not of betterment but of brutal necessity and the coffin ship. Cobden and Bright blessed England with cheap bread—and cursed her with the hatred of the Irish-American immigrant.

It is these experiences of Ireland's past which explain the ideal of complete economic independence.

[1] Murray and Law, *Ireland* (The Nations of To-day Series).

III. DUBLIN: STREETS, STATUES, AND PRICES

I LANDED in Dublin in the middle of its transport strike. This was a lengthy business, running into months, and if in some respects it showed Dublin to disadvantage, in others it revealed it as a city capable of dealing with emergency conditions. Normal road transport to the suburbs having ceased, the to-and-fro needs of working citizens were met by a service of lorries which ran morning and evening, conveying passengers by the thousand to their various suburban neighbourhoods, and conveying them free of charge. This fact—that bus and tram fares were no longer an item in the weekly budget of a good many artisans, clerks, and shop assistants—was no doubt an element in the equanimity with which the citizens of Dublin supported the annoyance of their strike. The lorries were supplied by the army, and each, in addition to its military driver, carried a Free State soldier, armed with a rifle; and it was the military who were on duty at the various street-corners where the vehicles pulled up, and who superintended the packing-in of the passengers.[1] This packing, by the way, was amazingly tight; if I had not seen it done, I should not have thought it possible to crush so many human beings into so small a space. I asked one of the military gentlemen on duty at the corner of Westmorland Street how many passengers he allowed to a lorry-load, and his answer was: 'Seventy!' . . . In spite of the armed military on all the lorries—or maybe because of their

[1] See Note. *The Free State Army.*

AN I.F.S. RECRUITING POSTER

presence—the emergency services were carried on with business-like absence of fuss; during the time I was there I saw no demonstration or suggestion of disorder. In the shops of the central district there were plenty of complaints—they were being hard hit by absence of suburban custom; but otherwise, so far as I could judge, there was a singular lack of grumbling. Earlier in the strike there had been a dangerous moment when the Irish Republican Army, ever ready to make trouble for the Government, offered its co-operation to the transport men; an offer which the strike leaders were wise enough to refuse. Had it been accepted, the citizens of Dublin might have had to suffer more than inconvenience, possibly a renewal of their experiences during the 'Troubles.'

One effect of the strike was to recall the Dublin of an earlier day by loosing on the streets an unwonted number of side-cars—long ousted from their olden pride of place by that international vehicle, the taxi. Save in remoter regions and in times of stress, such as transport strikes, the outside car, the ubiquitous vehicle of my youth, has all but declined to the status of museum piece—it is as a museum piece, a legendary vehicle, that it still attracts custom from the tourist. When, some weeks later, I came back to Dublin, the strike was over, trams and buses running freely—and the horse-drawn car, in consequence, was once more an exception in the streets.

. . . . . .

One of the first novelties that strike the tourist who visits Dublin not for the first time is the duplication of street-names: the Irish titles, in their Irish lettering,

placed above the older English version. Since Irish, in theory, is the national speech, wherever the two languages are used together, in documents or notices, it takes precedence of the language which everybody speaks and understands. As noted later, in the chapter on the Irish language, Dublin, when the last language census was taken, had no 'natural' Irish-speakers—not surprising when one considers that it was once a city of the English Pale and for centuries the focus of English rule and influence. I once, at haphazard, took a block in Grafton Street and scribbled in my note-book all the names above its shops and offices. I append the list, and, to the best of my belief, no name upon it implies descent from those whose mother-tongue was Irish. Yeates, Coventry, Dunn, Gordon, Chancellor, Vard, Mitchell; Hayes, Cunningham & Robinson; Millar & Beatty; Brown, Thomas & Co.; Combridge & Co.; and Lawrence. . . . I saw only one instance in a Dublin thoroughfare of English being given pre-eminence and prominence; that particular instance was at College Green, on the notice indicating the place where the road should be crossed. This College Green crossing is one of the most awkward in Dublin—the meeting-place of several wide roads, most of them embarrassed with tram-lines; hence, I conclude, the authority responsible for erection of notices felt it would be carrying the language-cult too far if the lives of unfortunate citizens were sacrificed because they had failed to understand Gaelic instructions.

All revolutionists, whatever their principles and whatever their race, are addicted to the changing of place-names; the commemoration, in streets and squares,

of heroes and events of the new regime in lieu of the eminent persons who were similarly honoured by the superseded form of government. The Nevski Prospect of old St. Petersburg is the Prospect of the Twenty-fifth of October in the U.S.S.R., and all German cities nowadays have their Adolf Hitler Place or Street. The Irish Free State, as in duty bound, has conformed to the usual practice but, on the whole, has conformed with moderation. So far, that is to say, as ordinary life and speech is concerned; legally and officially and postmarked on letters, the capital of the Free State is Baile Atha Cliath, but I never heard any one call it anything but Dublin. Most of the street-names in common use are the street-names of pre-treaty Dublin: Merrion Square is still Merrion Square; Fitzwilliam Street, Westmorland Street, Dame Street, Grafton Street—except by the addition of an Irish translation to their several corners, no one has tampered with their titles. The outstanding exception being the erstwhile Sackville Street which, since 1922, has borne the name of the Liberator, O'Connell. Unofficially it was often known by that name, before the year 1922, by Irishmen of Nationalist persuasion; so you called the street Sackville or called it O'Connell, you made known your political allegiance. Even to-day the double practice lingers. 'We call it Sackville Street,' I was once rebuked in a loyalist household where I had used the modern designation.

It is not only the title of Dublin's chief street which has been a bone of contention to Irishmen; the street itself is an epitome and symbol of recent Irish history. Within a few years it was twice a battle-ground: in 1916 between rebel Irish and the British garrison; and

half a dozen years later, when the British garrison had cleared out of Ireland, between warring sections of Irishmen. And both sets of combatants left their mark on the battle-ground; so much so, that there is little remaining of Sackville Street as it stood before the 'Troubles'; little save its monuments and public buildings—its elder Georgian dignity is a thing of the past. To-day it is an ordinary main thoroughfare of the modern type — business premises interspersed with cinemas.

On the west side of the street stands the General Post Office, which means more to the citizen of Dublin than Mount Pleasant does to the Londoner—for Mount Pleasant, in London, is merely postal business and the Post Office, Dublin, is history. A building in the classic style with an imposing pillared portico; and which, in addition to its daily activities in the public service, is the scene, on Easter Monday, of an annual ceremony in memory of the gallantry of Irish heroes and the tyranny of British oppression. Since we in England had other troubles on hand at the time, our memories concerning the siege at the Dublin Post Office are not always of the clearest; it may be as well, therefore, to append a brief account of the Easter rising, written from the Irish point of view, the moderate Irish point of view; there are many accounts more envenomed:[1]

'On Easter Monday, 1916, an insurrection broke out in Dublin. Several of the public buildings were seized by the insurgents, who issued a manifesto in the name of "the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic." Although in this document and elsewhere confidence in

[1] From *A Short History of the Irish People*, Hayden and Moonan.

the result was expressed, and allusion was made to the help expected from America and from "brave allies" in Europe, it seems unlikely that Pearse and the other Sinn Fein leaders, most of them cultured and highly intelligent men, really expected any great or prolonged material success. Most likely Mrs. Pearse truly explained the aims of her son and of his friends when she said that they knew they should fail, but they desired to save the soul of Ireland.

'There were outbreaks in a few places in Wexford, Louth, and Galway, and also in the neighbourhood of Dublin, but the country as a whole did not stir.[1] . . . In the General Post Office in O'Connell Street, over which floated a new flag, the white, green, and orange tricolour of the Irish Republic, the headquarters of the insurgents were established, and there for six days they withstood the attacks of the British troops who were being poured in from England. Then, on April 30, they surrendered. Other posts about the city were captured or abandoned one by one. The insurrection was over; the price was now to be estimated and paid.

'During the next few days the chief insurgent leaders —fifteen in all—having been condemned to death by drumhead courts martial of doubtful legality, were taken out each morning at dawn, in batches of two or three, and shot. All died bravely, maintaining to the end the righteousness of their cause, and declaring their willingness to give up their lives in the certain hope that their beloved country would be a gainer by their sacrifice.

[1] Roger Casement, landing on the Kerry coast from a German ship, had been arrested before he was able to communicate with the leaders of the insurrection.

Connolly was so desperately wounded that he had to be conveyed in an ambulance to the place of execution, and was shot sitting in a chair.

'In addition to this, over fifty prisoners were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment—six for life. Over a thousand were deported to England and there imprisoned without trial, and all Ireland was placed under martial law. It is stated that during the insurrection there were in Dublin 170 soldiers and 180 civilians killed, while nearly 300 buildings and property to the value of £3,000,000 were destroyed. The number of the wounded was certainly more than 1,300.'

That, from the Irish point of view, is the story of the Post Office battle of 1916; an event which is yearly celebrated, as Easter comes round, with much pomp and circumstance of patriotic hatred. Six years later the shock of battle, between Irishman and Irishman, was fiercest on the opposite side of the road; this time I quote an account of the fray as given in a guide-book —Muirhead's *Ireland*: 'O'Connell Street was the scene, in July 1922, of one of the last stands of the "Irregulars" of the anti-treaty party against the Free State Government. Almost the whole of the east side was destroyed by fire, including the building of the Royal Hibernian Academy in Abbey Street, and Cathal Brugha (Charles Burgess), leader of the "Irregulars," who counselled surrender but with the courage of fanaticism refused to surrender himself, was shot down as he rushed out at the Government troops.'

We of the neighbouring island have plenty of sins against Erin on our national conscience; so, to a certain extent, it is a consoling thought that, in the matter of

belligerent wreckage, the Free State combatants went several better than the British, even than the British Black and Tans. True, the Black and Tans burnt down a good stretch of Patrick Street, Cork, which perhaps can be set against Irish demolition of the east side of O'Connell Street; but it must be admitted that the Black and Tans never achieved any destruction so disastrous architecturally as the firing of the Dublin Customs House—fortunately not to the point of ruin—or the gutting of Gandon's other masterpiece, the Four Courts, when Rory O'Connor and his 'Irregular' troops, who had fortified themselves within its walls, were shelled out by Michael Collins. The destruction of the Four Courts was not only an architectural misfortune; from the historical point of view it was an irremediable disaster. Though its walls could be restored to their ancient outline, the documents they once housed had been burned to ashes. And among those vanished documents were the contents and treasures of the Record Office, some of them dating from the tenth century and many, existing only in manuscript, having never been transcribed. Ireland, for all time, is poorer for the ruin of the Four Courts.

. . . . . .

Sackville-O'Connell Street is a street of monuments—Nelson on his pillar dominating. I have no idea as to what is the orthodox attitude towards the pillar and its occupant—which assuredly commemorate an aspect of British imperialism. But the pillar itself is so worthy a memorial and so familiar a landmark (the trams all stop there!) that it may be that even the most

nationally minded prefer to turn a blind eye to its alien origin.

In line with the pillar, down the middle of the street, stand monuments of Irish patriots. O'Connell, the Liberator, nearest to the Liffey and the bridge that also bears his name; one of the figures on his pedestal, Erin casting off her fetters. O'Connell, the Liberator, who (like many others who have hoped for Erin's freedom) learned how difficult it is to persuade the sons of Erin to dwell together in unity. The last year of his life was darkened not only by the misery of the famine but by the breaking-away of the Young Ireland party from his own. Further up the street is a memorial to one of the Young Ireland seceders: Smith O'Brien, who headed the abortive rising of 1848. This was an ill-considered rising of no more than a few hundred peasants which was easily suppressed, in a few hours. Not surprising, this, since even the few hundreds who followed Smith O'Brien were armed, for the most part, with nothing more formidable than pikes; while the majority are said to have dispersed to their homes without fighting when they learned that no commissariat was provided for the 'army' and they would have to forage for themselves. Those who remained to carry on rebellion were engaged and defeated by a force of forty-six police. . . . An unfortunate little rebellion—its leader more courageous than wise. Having been arrested, he was tried for high treason and duly sentenced to death, a sentence commuted to transportation for life. Six years later, in 1854, he was set free from his Australian bondage, on condition that he did not return to the British Isles; two years later even that prohibition was withdrawn. William

I.T.A.

O'Connell St., Dublin: G.P.O. and Nelson Pillar

Smith O'Brien was one of the more fortunate of Irish rebel patriots.

At the northern end of the street, beyond the pillar, is a statue to Father Mathew, the apostle of temperance; and beyond that again the monument that commemorates Charles Stewart Parnell—inscribed with words of his own, to the effect that no man may set bounds to the march of a nation. . . . Parnell needs no monument to keep his memory green; human nature is so made that it remembers longest, remembers most kindly, not the successful but those who have tragically failed. The life and death of Parnell in itself is a legend that needs no retouching by the literary craftsman; but it is safe to wager that for many years to come the literary craftsman will see in it material for drama. His unquestioned domination of his followers, his aloofness of life, his insight and strength as an opponent; his triumph over false accusation, the confounding of his enemies, the near promise of success; and then, at the height of his power, revelation of his vulnerable sin. A revelation that meant instant disaster to the Irish cause, a blow to the hopes of Irish Nationalism—and, within a year, a death-blow to Parnell himself.

In Barry O'Brien's *Life of Parnell* is the following description of the 'Uncrowned King of Ireland'—given by one who knew him in his day of sovereignty: 'Parnell was the most remarkable man I ever met. I do not say the ablest man; I say the most remarkable and the most interesting. He was an intellectual phenomenon. He was unlike any one I had ever met. He did and said things unlike other men. His ascendency over his party was extraordinary. There has never been anything like

it in my experience in the House of Commons. He succeeded in surrounding himself . . . with men exactly suited for his purpose. . . . He had a most efficient party, an extraordinary party. I do not say extraordinary as an opposition, but extraordinary as a government. The absolute obedience, the strict discipline, the military discipline in which he held them was unlike anything I have ever seen. They were always there, they were always ready, they were always united, they never shirked the combat and Parnell was supreme all the time.'

And another estimate, this time by a Frenchman: [1]

'Parnell shares with O'Connell the glory of being the greatest of Irish leaders. Like O'Connell he was a landlord and his family traditions were those of an aristocrat. Like him, too, he was overbearing, even despotic in temperament. But in all else Parnell was the very opposite of the "Liberator." The Protestant leader of a Catholic people, he won popularity in Ireland without being at all times either understood or personally liked. In outward appearance he had nothing of the Irishman, nothing of the Celt about him. He was cold, distant, and unexpansive in manner and had more followers than friends. His speech was not that of a great orator. Yet he was singularly powerful and penetrating, with here and there brilliant flashes that showed profound wisdom. A man of few words, of strength rather than breadth of mind—his political ideals were often uncertain and confused—he was better fitted to be a combatant than a constructive politician. Beyond all else he was a parliamentary fighter of extraordinary ability, perfectly self-controlled, cold and bitter, powerful at hitting back. . . .'

[1] M. Paul Dubois in *Contemporary Ireland*.

In June 1890 his parliamentary colleagues, seventy in number, entertained Charles Stewart Parnell at a dinner, in honour of his forty-fourth birthday. Coming events had already cast a shadow; Captain O'Shea had filed a petition wherein the leader of the Irish party was cited as co-respondent; but the precedent of the recent Pigott case justified his followers in their optimistic belief that the O'Shea accusation was another move of Parnell's political enemies and, when tested in court, would also show no basis of fact. Parnell himself encouraged that belief. 'You may rest quite sure'—so he wrote to one of his followers—'that if this proceeding ever comes to trial (which I very much doubt) it is not I who will quit the court with discredit'; and at the dinner he spoke in terms of confident enthusiasm. Agreement had been come to with Gladstone and the Liberal party; the Liberals, so soon as they returned to power, would introduce 'a great measure of Home Rule which would be accepted by the Irish people.' It was at the end of June 1890 that the dinner was held and the confident prophecy made; and some five months later, in November of the same year, the O'Shea case came up in the divorce court. The Irish party would have stood by Parnell, but its Liberal allies drew much of their support from the chapel, the Nonconformist Conscience; and Gladstone, as spokesman of the Nonconformist Conscience, demanded his removal from leadership. Parnell and those of his followers who were faithful to him refused to admit an English right to dictate to Irishmen in the matter of their leadership; while a larger section of the party hoped, by acquiescence in the Liberal demand, to secure their promised measure

of Home Rule. There followed the historic meeting in Committee Room 15, when the Irish party was rent in twain, into Parnellites and Anti-Parnellites; and before a year was over Parnell was dead—worn out by ceaseless work and anxiety. 'He rushed from one end of the country to another, addressing meetings, fighting elections, stimulating his followers, answering his defamers, and all the time exhausting the scant reserves of strength that were left him.' [1]

Once again Irishmen had turned on each other and were fighting in the presence of the enemy. Parnell, in his *Manifesto to the Irish People*, appealed to them 'to save me from the English wolves now howling for my destruction,' but it was not only the English wolves who howled; there were those among his own countrymen who demanded his political life. An enemy even more formidable than British Nonconformity was the priesthood of the Catholic Church. Catholic Ireland, it must not be forgotten, is likewise Puritan Ireland; and when the O'Shea decree was made absolute, and the co-respondent married Mrs. O'Shea before the Steyning registrar, the Bishop of Raphoe denounced the step as 'the climax of brazened horrors.' If there had been nothing else against him, Parnell would have been heavily handicapped from the moment the Catholic hierarchy denounced him as unfit for leadership by reason of his moral offence; it was thanks, in great part, to this clerical antagonism that, in three by-elections, his adherents were defeated at the polls; but he was never a man to acquiesce in defeat and he accepted the challenge of the Irish priesthood as he had accepted

[1] *Ireland since Parnell*, Shechan.

that of the British nonconformist. Though the odds were heavily against him he held on; in Parliament and out, now in England, now in Ireland, he worked so long as life was in him—had he lived he might have won through. By September the strain had told and he fell ill; nevertheless he kept on with the struggle, and in the little town of Creggs, in County Galway, he made his last speech to his countrymen. Creggs, 'a miserable place set in hungry land and bog. On a Sunday in September 1891, with the rain falling in lumps and the air brown and clotted with mist, a terrible figure stumbles forward on a platform round which press a crowd of villagers and peasants in rough tweeds . . . most of them careless of the rain and indifferent to the risk of a chill. The rain mourns down on the planking as the figure with one arm in a sling, crippled with rheumatism, puffy, sallow, and drowsy from Bright's disease, begins to speak. With his unbound hand he has waved aside his friend's attempts to hold an umbrella over his head. He would talk as a man who could command the elements as he commanded the love of these rain-sodden folk beneath him. "You 're worthy of it!" "Give it to them!" "Ah! that 's the talk!" they cry as he rattles out the icy defiances to his enemies. He has many now, for his day is done. . . .

'They helped him off the slippery platform, led him through the puddles pounding with rain, drew up the sofa for him near the fire, and he lay down. His doctor and friend begged him to rest in Ireland for a while until his heart should have recovered from the strain of travel' [1]; but he refused, urgent to get home. That

[1] Quoted from *Ireland of the Welcomes*, by D. Kelleher.

speech had been the last flicker of a flame all but spent; it was a dying man who travelled back to England and the wife who had cost him his career and cost Ireland her hopes. A few days later he died in her arms at Brighton, forty-five years old; an age at which many politicians are beginning to make themselves known. Five days after his death his body was brought back to Ireland for burial and two hundred thousand mourners followed it to Glasnevin cemetery. It was twenty years later, in 1911, that his statue was raised in O'Connell Street.

. . . . . .

It was once said to me that Dublin, whatever it has gained under the present regime—by its capital status and new industries—has lost its old attribute of elegance. That, no doubt, is true; but the same comment might be made with equal truth of all those cities of Europe which, in days that the middle-aged can still remember, were centres of a leisured social life which has practically ceased to exist. Elegance is pre-eminently an eighteenth-century quality—unhurried, incompatible with speed; and the atmosphere of the eighteenth century lingered in Dublin far longer than in London. Further, it has always been an attribute of the social life that revolves around a court; and though royalty itself persistently cold-shouldered Dublin, it maintained there in state its representative, the viceroy. Whatever its relations with the British monarchy, and whatever its administrative subjection to Whitehall, Dublin has always known the social dignity of a capital, while the most characteristic of her residential quarters date from the eighteenth and

early nineteenth centuries; that is to say, from an age endowed in admirable degree with a sense of architectural proportion. It is that sense of proportion that gives their worth to the façades of these elder Dublin houses; the right spacing of their rows of windows and their fanlights.

Like most modern capitals, Dublin of to-day is growing rapidly. Independence has meant an increase in administrative offices and therefore in the number of civil servants whose work is carried on in Dublin, while the new industries have attracted immigrants from other parts of Ireland. On her every border the builder is at work, thrusting out rows of suburban dwellings. Their erection entails, as a matter of course, the disappearance of many of the older suburban estates —charming, semi-country mansions, set in grounds that the house-agent describes as 'matured' and whose beauty one regrets to see pass. It is the same everywhere when a capital city starts growing—but these Dublin houses have a special, a comfortable dignity. . . . For aesthetic reasons, it is to be hoped that her necessary growth will soon reach its limit. One of the greatest attractions of the city is the swiftness with which her streets can be left for sea or open country; if Dublin were situated anywhere on the mainland of Europe, the probability is that the average Englishman would not be ignorant, as he is at present, of the loveliness of her surroundings. If any continental country had the luck to possess Killiney Strand and the southward view beyond it; if we reached the Hill of Howth via Calais instead of via Holyhead, Dublin would surely rank high, and very high, in the estimation of the tourist.

To hope that Dublin will not eat up her surrounding country-side with the insatiable greed of so many modern cities, is not to deny her need for new streets and terraces. In few cities of her size can the need be more urgent; even the casual visitor may soon convince himself of that, if he turns into any of the meaner streets which are accessible enough from Dublin's 'West End.' Having made the tour of a good many such streets, where children swarm on pavements and in doorways of tenements that look as if no hand had been set to them for decades, I was not as surprised as I might have been when I was told that, out of a population of about four hundred thousand, ten thousand families are living in single rooms.[1] This degree of overcrowding, however, must be laid to the discredit of Dublin of the past rather than of Dublin of the present; which (largely, I believe, because blessed with 'Alfie' Byrne as its mayor) is planning suburbs, and raising blocks of flats in the centre of the town, for the tenants it clears from its slums. A million pounds a year is being spent on slum clearance and rehousing, and, by this expenditure, it is hoped that at the end of five years the ten thousand single-room families of Dublin will, one and all, have been provided with decent accommodation. Some of

[1] The same estimate is given by the Dublin correspondent of the *Sunday Times* (September 8, 1935). He adds that in the year 1933 'there were over fifty thousand persons living four or more in single rooms in the area of Greater Dublin, and so great is the continuous demand for accommodation that even basement flats, when vacated, are occupied by those seeking shelter before the official act of closing can be enforced.' Birth control, of course, is not practised in Ireland; a fact which in part explains this high percentage of Dublin overcrowding.

the accommodation already provided is considerably better than decent; there are well-appointed dwellings, with bathroom included, for which the fortunate tenants pay no more than 7*s.* 6*d.* a week. Needless to say, it is impossible to rehouse in this manner at economic rents; as with all modern housing schemes, the greater part of the cost inevitably falls on the community. At present, however, the city seems prosperous enough to warrant a liberal expenditure on slum clearance; whatever may be the case in other parts of the country, Dublin, taken as a whole, has undoubtedly benefited by the tariffs wherewith the Free State has hedged itself round. 'Dublin,' says an old guide-book in my possession, a guide-book dating from the eighteen-nineties, 'possesses no manufactures of importance except those of whisky and porter.' That is by no means the case to-day; the majority of the new, protected industries have been started in Dublin or its neighbourhood.[1]

Every advantage, in one way or another, must be paid for, and Ireland's independence of the foreign manufacturer demands its price from the citizen. Rents excepted, the ordinary necessities and small luxuries of daily life seem dearer in Dublin than they are in London; proof of that statement stares from the windows of a familiar red frontage in Grafton Street. In my time

[1] 'The most important industrial centre in the country is Dublin, which contains several large breweries, distilleries, tobacco factories, a very large biscuit factory, several textile factories, and the engineering works of the Great Southern Railway. Dublin has benefited more than any other locality by the protective tariffs, the majority of the new protected industries having been started in the neighbourhood of the capital city, which is, of course, the largest and richest market in the country.'—Official Handbook, 1932.

I have set foot in a good many Woolworth establishments, on the continent of Europe as well as in my own country; but this Woolworth establishment in Grafton Street, Dublin, is the only one with which I am acquainted which breaks the familiar rule of no price higher than sixpence! Here some of the merchandise runs up to double that price—and quite a good deal of it to ninepence! The bottles of scent that can be bought elsewhere for sixpence have added on another twopence, while a pencil I purchased cost three-halfpence instead of a penny. . . . I have seen it argued in print that it is only non-necessities that have risen in price as result of the tariff; the daily budget of the poorer classes is but little affected by its incidence. But that argument could hardly be maintained to-day, in view of the fact that the Dublin relief authority, the Board of Assistance, has recently (in the autumn of 1935) been urged to increase the rate of outdoor relief in order to cope with the increasing cost of living. The price of the four-pound loaf is elevenpence to tenpence as against our eightpence; sugar, of their cheaper kind, threepence-halfpenny a pound. Butter, Irish butter, by a curious anomaly, can be sold cheaper in England than in the country of its origin. In the summer of 1935 the butter which was being disposed of in London for somewhere about tenpence a pound, thanks to excise requirements, cost at least one and fourpence in the Free State—while the Budget of 1935 added an extra fourpence on to tea. Confectionery is one of the industries which is being encouraged, so Free State infancy has to pay somewhat heavily for its lollipops. I spent some minutes at the window of a Dublin sweetshop of

the ordinary, very ordinary, type, jotting down the prices of its various sugary delights; and when I came home I compared my list with prices in a shop-window of similar class in my own neighbourhood of Chelsea. The type of chocolate sweets that my Chelsea shop purveyed for two shillings a pound cost four shillings in the Dublin establishment—which seems excessive; for four shillings, in England, one expects a superior chocolate. Another expensive dainty was the pineapple chunk, which in London you may buy for sixpence a quarter, but which ran, in Dublin, to a shilling and three-halfpence. The difference was less marked in the case of the little boxes containing sugary slices of orange and lemon; these only cost tenpence-halfpenny, as against a London sixpence. . . . And here it may be noted that there is another item of frequent small expenditure which is higher in the Free State than with us; I refer to postage; the cost of an ordinary letter is not three-halfpence but twopence. If you live on the border, I imagine, you save up your letters till you happen to be walking across it, and entrust your correspondence to His Majesty's mails and not to those of Saorstát Eireann.

To a certain extent the cost of the poor man's budget must have been tempered, throughout the country, by the free beef ration whereby, as a form of poor relief, Mr. de Valera's Government has disposed of much of the meat which, in days before the annuities dispute, found its market beyond the Irish Sea. But that, in the nature of things, can be no more than a temporary expedient. When the new agricultural policy is sufficiently advanced, when tillage has sufficiently superseded pasture and the number of cattle has dropped accordingly,

there may be little or no superfluous beef available for free distribution.

As noted above, the continued increase in the cost of living has resulted in demands for a corresponding increase in the Dublin rate of relief; demands which have, so far, been turned down on the ground of expense. In this connection it may be of interest to give some of the figures of Irish unemployment allowance. Under the Unemployment Assistance Act, a man without dependants receives nine shillings, seven shillings, or six shillings a week—according to his district or residence; while a widow or spinster (presumably also without dependants) gets seven and six, six shillings, or five shillings. As the corresponding rates in England and Scotland are for a man fifteen shillings and threepence and for a woman thirteen shillings and sixpence, it is not to be wondered at that Irishmen likely to come on the dole are plentiful in Liverpool and Glasgow; where not only is public authority more generous with its money but the necessaries of life are cheaper.

IV. THE SWEEP

WHATEVER industries may, or may not, be flourishing in the Irish Free State, there can be little doubt of the prosperous condition of the Irish Hospitals Sweepstakes. True, there has of late been a certain falling-off in the number of subscribing gamblers—thanks to the restrictions enforced by the British Government. Personally I am always pleasurably stirred when I hear that the said restrictions have been evaded by my countrymen, and it was with real enjoyment that I bought myself a ticket for the Derby Sweep at the counter of a Dublin tobacconist. Not that I had even the faintest hope of coming out a winner in the draw—from the moment I paid it, I looked on my ten shillings as lost; I am as nearly destitute of the gambling instinct as it is possible for any one to be, and I have never been able to get up excitement with regard to races or cards. My purchase of the ticket was merely a protest against interference with my right to behave like a fool—and incidentally with a comparatively harmless form of gambling, perhaps the least harmful of all. . . . I sometimes wonder whether our good, earnest legislators are altogether wise in closing so many of the outlets for our natural, sinful energy; unless they manage to abolish the sinful energy at the same time as they deprive it of outlet, it is bound to burst out somewhere. Quite apart from the all-too-frequent desire to gain money easily, there is in most human beings—at any rate in youth—an urge towards risk and excitement; which there are many worse ways

of gratifying than by taking a ticket in a lottery. In politics, for instance, which encourage hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness to a much greater extent than the National Hospitals Sweepstake. It may be that authority, in giving it patronage, is consciously and prudently diverting some of the vehement Irish energy that would otherwise concentrate on politics. Bread and the circus was the formula for contenting old Rome, and the Sweep, which provides both bread and circus, has done much towards contenting modern Dublin.

When I say bread, I mean not only bread in the shape of hospital maintenance, but bread in the shape of employment, widespread employment. The permanent staff is round about two thousand, with very few exceptions women. Even with the aid of amazing machines which catch out the slightest mistake on the part of the worker, there are two thousand people employed, the year round, and employed at decent wages, in filing and punching and indexing and writing receipts. While three times a year, as each Derby, Grand National, and Cambridgeshire approaches and a real rush begins, these permanent employees require the assistance of another two thousand 'temporaries.' The wages of the girls on the permanent staff begin at thirty shillings, rising to forty or forty-five shillings, while the picked girls, who hold more responsible positions, get three pounds. The average of earnings, however, is far more than this; all overtime is paid for and the rush weeks always mean overtime. Ordinary hours are from ten to five and employees are entitled to a fortnight's holiday in the year. In the offices over which I was escorted the girls were working under excellent conditions as to light and

air, and I was told that every building where the work was carried on was provided with a rest-room where a qualified nurse was in attendance. As for the temporaries, many among them are re-engaged regularly and can count on some months of employment in the course of the year. It was once remarked to me that the Sweep had saved Dublin financially; and though that may be a bit of an exaggeration, certain it is that it could not close down without infliction of the suffering that comes of widespread unemployment.

Another beneficiary of the Sweep is the Free State Government; the five-and-twenty per cent it appropriates must be of comfortable help to the Finance Minister when he sits down to work out his Budget. I have seen criticism in the Press to the effect that official authority is over-slow in deciding what is to be done with its share of the gamble; but that criticism does not apply to the share of the gambling public. Winners get their money without undue delay, and of my own experience I can testify that the system of verifying tickets is swift as well as accurate. In the department responsible for safe keeping of counterfoils my escort, Dr. Daly of the Hospitals Trust, asked me did I remember the number of my Derby ticket? As it happened I had the ticket itself in my purse; I produced it and he handed it to a young woman who was one of the heads of the department. 'Get me that number as quickly as you can,' he said, at the same time drawing out his watch—and in thirty-seven seconds the girl was back with the counterfoil! Out of the thousands on thousands stacked in that room, she had been able to lay instant hand on the number wanted. Nor was this my only example of the

swift and detailed working of the system; I believed that a friend of mine was employed on the clerical staff, but when her name was given to one of the overseers I was told she was not on the list of regular employees —she was probably one of the extra, rush-time workers. Accordingly we applied to another department, which promptly turned up a card for Dr. Daly's inspection. It must have borne other particulars besides name and address, since he volunteered the information that she had a very good record as a worker.

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There are fifty-three hospitals in the Irish Free State which participate in the takings of the Dublin Sweep; only one, I believe, a Protestant institution, has looked the gift horse in the mouth and declined to handle the profits of a gambling system. The other fifty-three, whether municipal institutions or run by the Church, have no scruples about ill-gotten gains. With the opening of the new hospital at Mullingar the number will rise to fifty-four. This Mullingar hospital is an actual creation of the Dublin Sweep, the necessary funds having been allotted for the purpose. It is a building in the modern concrete style, white and shining with much glass, standing on the outskirts of the town; and its equipment will be as modern in style as its exterior. The majority of the hospitals benefiting—twenty-nine out of fifty-three—are situated in the capital. Of the remaining twenty-four, nine are in Cork, four in Limerick, and three in Waterford. An institution which has specially benefited is the National Maternity Hospital, a building containing eighty beds (at the cost,

I was told, of about £1,200 per bed), run entirely on electric power from the 'Shannon Scheme' and provided with every latest convenience for medical and surgical advantage. A luxury hospital from the point of view of patient and of doctor alike; and which I was assured had (thanks to the Sweep) arisen in place of a hospital anything but up to date—the building that housed it was in places near to falling down. Incidentally the young doctor who showed us round mentioned that our English maternal death-rate was higher than that of Dublin; whereupon I asked him if he thought this lesser Irish risk of motherhood was due to absence of unskilled attempts at abortion. His reply was, he could not give an opinion, but he added that attempted abortion was extremely rare in Ireland. By the Catholic, destruction of unborn life is held to be a mortal sin, and in his experience he had only come across two cases—one, he believed, accidental.

. . . . . .

The circus element in the Dublin Sweep makes itself most obvious in the draw—which is always an occasion for spectacle. There are bands and processions and military buglers, and elaborate setting on the stage of the Mansion House, and fancy dress for the young women of the mixing teams. For the draw I witnessed —for the Derby Sweep of 1935—the selected setting represented 'Spring' and the mixing team were clad appropriately in costumes representing the flowers of the season—apple-blossom, lilac, laburnum, tulips, and the like. It was explained in the official programme that a more elaborate setting had at first been planned;

this original design, however, was intended for the stage of the Plaza, and the Plaza was destroyed by fire at the end of April 1935, only a few weeks before the draw. When its imposing hall went up in flames, it was realized that the smaller space available in the Dublin Mansion House could not stage the original scheme of decoration effectively. For the previous Grand National draw there had been a most ornate background, representing a bridal procession in the act of leaving the church. The figures in the procession were life-size and fashionably clad, and, by a stroke of good showmanship, the creations adorning the bride and her maids were subsequently raffled for by twelve hundred couples contemplating matrimony and worn at a wedding in Yorkshire.

Having stated why it was necessary to abandon the original scheme of decoration, the programme went on to explain poetically that 'the rapidity with which the sweepstakes organization recovered itself from the shock of the Plaza fire, the almost instant springing into life of a new set of departmental creations to make up for the heavy loss sustained, and the remarkably wonderful re-birth of the organization, suggested the symbol "Spring."' Accordingly 'the processional lorry, carrying the counterfoils to the Mansion House,' took 'the form of a floral representation of the lost drum' (lost, that is to say, in the burnt-out Plaza), 'surmounted by the figure of the famous bird of fable, the phoenix, rising from its ashes. Spring,' it is further suggested, 'is a symbol not only appropriate to this particular setting but also to the hope that springs eternal (if one may be allowed a pun) in the breast of every ticket

buyer, and to the spring and summer of life that come in their fullness to the lucky ones who achieve the greater prizes.'

One of the first things that struck me, on arrival in Dublin, was the infrequent use of make-up. When it is present on the female Irish face, it is applied, as a rule, with economy. I noticed that even the spring-flower girls of the sweepstake draw had made sparing use of it—rather too sparing; full in the glare of the electric light, they would sometimes have been all the comelier for lipstick and eyebrows and rouge. It may be that this comparative abstinence from cosmetics is due, in part, to the fact that cosmetics, like other small luxuries, are considerably dearer in Dublin than they are in London.

The opening of the draw is ceremonious as well as spectacular, countenanced by the presence of civic dignitaries and preceded by official speeches and a blast of military bugles. The actual drawing of numbers from the drum is accomplished by relays of nurses in uniform; they are chosen from nurses employed in hospitals which participate in the Sweep. Five or six at a time, they take up their places in front of the gilt drum and, when its revolutions have slowed to a halt, each inserts a hand into an adjacent 'porthole,' extracts a counterfoil, and holds it high above her head. Particulars of the winning counterfoils are read out by an official announcer, and the counterfoils themselves are marked by the Chief Commissioner of Police before being passed to the table where sit the official recorders. Winners who hail from the United States or the Irish Free State have their luck proclaimed in full, address

as well as name, but nowadays the announcer is cautiously secretive with regard to the identity of other alien gamblers. In order to safeguard illegal winnings, he merely gives the name or the *nom de guerre,* the number of a ticket, and, as sole address, a vaguely magnificent 'Europe.' Publication of results is no longer permitted in British newspapers, an embargo which seems on a par of futility with the refusal of Free State cinema censorship to allow any news film showing our Jubilee rejoicings. For, apart from its grandmotherly silliness, the embargo is not even effective; the difficulty of communicating with British ticket-holders is got over by announcement from the wireless station of Athlone.

All the same, there can be no doubt that the measures of espionage instituted by the British Government—its violation of the secrecy of correspondence, etc.—have been to a certain extent effective. Subscriptions from across the Irish Sea have dropped off by some hundreds of thousands of pounds. The chambermaid in one of my hotels told me that a relation of hers, a civil servant in England, had been in the habit of bringing over something like three hundred pounds subscribed by friends and fellow-workers for the purchase of Derby tickets. That was over now. Being in Government service he dared no longer undertake Sweep commissions, since discovery would probably mean dismissal.

Incidentally the Sweep must give a valuable stimulus to the Irish tourist industry. Before each of its events the cross-channel traffic grows busy—a single excursion from Liverpool brought no less than four hundred and fifty visitors to witness a Grand National draw. And on one occasion, at least, the promoters of the Sweep did

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a good deal to counteract our British restrictions by means of a Rugby football match. This was played at Dublin, between two English teams, for a hundred-guinea challenge trophy, offered by the Hospitals Trust, the teams in question coming from Wigan and Leeds. No ceremony in Dublin is complete without the presence of the lord mayor—known affectionately as 'Alfie'; so the Lord Mayor of Dublin, complete with chain of office, kicked off. Excursionists in their thousands crossed the Irish Sea to witness the match and spend money in Dublin; and it is fairly safe to conclude that most, if not all, of those excursionists invested in tickets for the Sweep.

V. LIMERICK TO CASTLECONNELL

THE first time I stayed in the city of Limerick (when I was young and Victoria was queen) I set out from it one morning with a stick in my hand and a map in my pocket, and, after some hours of happy exploration on the Clare side of Shannon, struck the river itself at a point below the Falls of Doonass. Thence I followed the footpath upstream, past the half-mile of rapids and on to smooth water and the ferry; an aged ferryman rowed me across to Castleconnell, on the Limerick bank, and showed me the way to the inn. There I stayed my hunger on bread and cheese and beer and—the day drawing on—made my way back to Limerick by train. Some of the best days of my life have been spent on foot in the open air, but there is none, I think, I remember more happily than this. None, I think, that I remember more clearly: the path by the river, the rapids, the islets, the banks set with trees, the watching herons! And the place where the stream curves sharply round a bend, with the ruin of a tower commanding it; the tower that gives its name to Castleconnell and that once was a stronghold of the kings of Munster, the O'Briens. None of these delights was ever blurred in my memory. This I can be certain of because, when I saw them again, after the lapse of thirty-five years and over, from the time I struck the Shannon my way was never strange to me; at each turn of the river I knew what I had to expect.

This time, however, when I set out from Limerick,

my purpose was not only a day in the open and a tramp to the Falls of Doonass; the first stage of my journey was three miles and more of road to Ardnacrusha, the new power-station of the 'Shannon Scheme' which supplies electricity to the greater part of the Free State. 'The first great industrial enterprise of the Irish Free State, the harnessing of the Shannon'—so my guide-book proudly informed me; adding that visitors were conducted round the power-station on Sundays and holidays at certain stated hours, but that at other times a permit had to be obtained from the Electricity Supply Board in Dublin. This latter item of information was (luckily for me) not strictly in accordance with the facts. When I arrived at Ardnacrusha on an ordinary working day, and at an hour not stated, no difficulty was made about showing me over the power-station. I presented myself at the entrance, asked if I could see round, and was at once taken in tow by a courteous and informative escort.

The idea of harnessing the waters of the Shannon is credited to an Irish engineer, Dr. T. A. McLaughlin; but it was the German engineering firm of Siemens-Schuckert which obtained the contract and translated the idea into actuality. . . . I have heard it said that, though the acceptance of the German tender was cheaper for the country than the acceptance of the higher estimate of an English firm, it was a loss for the tradesmen of Limerick. The German colony at Ardnacrusha kept itself to itself in the matter of purchases, imported its necessities and luxuries from the Fatherland, and spent little money in the neighbourhood; whereas a similar colony of British workmen would have been a source of

comfortable profit. Be that as it may, Siemens-Schuckert brought over their German engineers and artisans who were camped in a little settlement at Ardnacrusha while they constructed the dam and power-house and navigation lock, and the canal with its intake from the Shannon. The work of construction took rather over four years; beginning in August 1925 it was completed by the end of 1929.

'Between Lough Derg and the tidal estuary' (I quote from a booklet on the subject, published in Limerick) 'there is a difference in the river level of 34·45 metres, and this fall is utilized as the most economic for the exploitation of power. A weir to control the water supply is constructed at a suitable point—Parteen Villa —one mile above O'Brien's Bridge; connected with it is an intake building to regulate the amount of water into the new channel or head race. This extends for seven and a half miles at a high level, and the full advantage of the complete fall is realized at Ardnacrusha, one of the highest natural points a few miles outside Limerick. Here the power-station is constructed for the generation and dissemination of electric energy. The spent water returns to its own bed (the Shannon) at Parteen Lax (a mile or two above Limerick) by a tail race extending for roughly one and a quarter miles.' The head race is about three hundred feet wide at the surface and thirty-five feet deep; the tail race, cut mainly through rock, has a much narrower channel.

The scheme, it was explained to me, has by no means reached its full development; with time and further engineering achievement—the construction of new weirs

and embankments—all the Shannon chain of lakes, consisting of Lough Allen, Lough Ree, and Lough Derg, will be utilized as vast storage basins; which, in their turn, will necessitate the installation of additional turbines at Ardnacrusha. Even as it is, electrical energy is transmitted from the Shannon over practically all the Free State—the extreme northern region of County Donegal excepted—and the enterprise is a product of the new industrial spirit and ambition, aiming at the creation of a Southern Ireland where the work of the factory runs side by side with the work of the farm. So far there has not been much return to the State for the millions sunk in the scheme; but I was told by my escort that in the preceding year (1934) it had shown a profit of fifty thousand pounds on its working and that the profit would have been considerably larger—more like a hundred and fifty thousand pounds—if it had not been for the damage wrought upon the lines by an unusually heavy storm. Responsibility for the working of the system is vested in a Board of Control consisting of not less than three or more than seven members; these members are nominated by the Executive Council (the equivalent of our Cabinet); their period of office is for five years only, but they are eligible for reappointment. According to the *Official Handbook 1932*, the Act of 1927 whereby the Board of Control was instituted 'envisages the management of the enterprise . . . as a business concern, free from political interference. The Board carries on the business of generation, transmission, and retail distribution of electricity, retailing of electric appliances, and contracting for wiring and power installations. It has a well-organized publicity

bureau and does extensive advertising. It has extensive powers for compulsory acquisition and purchase of electricity supply concerns and has utilized this to establish a virtual State monopoly of the business. . . . Development in the use of electricity has been rapid since the establishment of the national supply. . . . Although the national networks are only recently completed, the use of electricity is very general for lighting and domestic purposes, even in small villages. It is used for street lighting in practically all localities. The use of domestic electric appliances is widespread, electric heaters are popular because of the mild and variable nature of the Irish climate. . . . In small industry the use of electric power is growing rapidly. In the cities it is almost universally used; in the smaller towns and villages every day to an increasing degree, particularly in the local industries, such as bakeries, printing works, garages, mills, creameries, etc. On a large scale it is utilized for tramways and for such heavy industry as exists in the country. . . . When the project of the large-scale development of the River Shannon for power purposes was first mooted in 1924, there was much public controversy regarding the enterprise, yet it has been but a short time in operation when it has become clear that the demand will necessitate further development in the immediate future.'

Of that there can be no doubt; if Fianna Fail's ambition of an Ireland independent of the foreigner—of his fuel as well as his food and manufactures—is even partially fulfilled, further increase in the sources of electric supply will be an imperative necessity. The power-station of Ardnacrusha stands for more than the Free State's plans

for prosperity; it stands for Ireland's dreams of nationhood completely independent.[1]

From Ardnacrusha, which is Shannon in harness, I tramped off in search of a Shannon less tame and more familiar. When I had been duly impressed by the marvels of the power-station, and the figures my engineering cicerone quoted, I asked him what had been the effect of the intake on the rapids—the Falls of Doonass. Had the rush of water, the height of the stream, greatly dwindled? He shrugged and didn't think so: I gathered he was not much interested—hadn't even been to see. Myself, I was interested; and though I knew well that the majesty of a river cannot be allowed to weigh against the benefits conferred by electric power; although I knew that and kept the thought in mind, I confess my heart sank when at length I struck the Shannon at the remembered spot, below the Falls of Doonass. For the river had sunk lower, many feet lower, than its old level; where once the water had spumed into the air as it rushed over boulders, it now ran meekly at their base. And in the middle of the river-bed, where once had swirled a current, I beheld a swan, not swimming but walking on a shelf of rock, paddling with its feet barely covered. As I have said, my heart sank, and for a minute or two I gazed disconsolately at what was left of the Shannon; then I remembered, and took hope

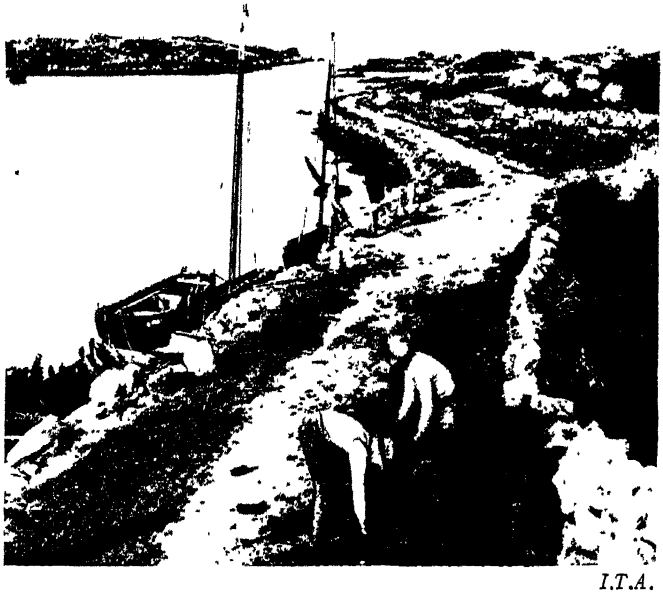
[1] It is possible that, before many years are over, the Shannon electric supply may be augmented from other Irish rivers. There is talk of a power-station on the Liffey (which falls rapidly from its source in the Wicklow Hills) to meet the needs of growing Dublin.

from the thought, that what I saw was a result not only of the Ardnacrusha intake but of a drought unusual in Ireland. For weeks past the countryman had been hoping and praying for a change of weather and everywhere the rivers had dwindled. In normal weather conditions—normal Irish conditions, with no lack of rain—the contrast between Shannon as she is and once was at Doonass would not be so striking as in the summer of 1935. All the same, I imagine that, if I lived near Doonass, I should find myself regretting the day of magnificent rapids!

There are those who regret the passing of the rapids for reasons other than aesthetic. One resident of the district—an elderly gentleman of the gamekeeper type—gave me his anything but good opinion of the mechanically minded persons who had drained off the Shannon water for their power-station and thereby ruined the Castleconnell industry of fishing. 'Where's all the salmon that used to come up here?' he demanded dramatically, pointing to the sunken river. 'Shall I tell you where they are? Down by Limerick, in the tail race. Thousands of 'em! That's where they are and that's where they stay—in the tail race!' All the fishing you got here nowadays was trout. The Shannon was no longer a salmon river, it was just a trout stream. 'And look at it now—the boys can walk across it on the rocks!' He remembered the time when the hotel near by, where now were one or two commercial travellers, was filled with gentlemen who came to fish. . . . In times past, no doubt, the plentiful salmon had meant money in the old man's pocket; he was one of the minor victims of mechanical progress. I left him as I

I.T.A.

STACKING PEAT IN DONEGAL



I.T.A.

SHIPPING PEAT AT CARNA, CO. GALWAY

had found him, smoking his pipe and gazing meditatively across what was left of the Shannon.

A little way on and I came in sight of another reminder of change; change that, in its way, is as characteristic of new Ireland as the turbines and dam of Ardnacrusha. On the left bank of the river, on rising ground, stood that which had once been a house; four gaunt walls, with no roof to them, and rows of gaps that had been windows. In its day a dwelling of considerable size; one of the many country houses that went up in flames when the Irishman had risen against his British oppressor; or—having got rid of the British oppressor—turned his gun against his fellow-countryman. Not uncommon objects of the Irish landscape, these tragic houses, destroyed in revenge or perhaps from sheer lust of destruction. Sometimes with unfortunate results to more than the family whose house was turned into a bonfire. On one occasion I was driven past an estate where—my escort told me—five houses had flamed in one night; the fire-raisers, not content with destroying the dwelling of the owner of the property, added that of his agent, a neighbouring rectory, and two other houses to their bag. In consequence, some eighty people employed on the property, indoors and out, were suddenly thrown out of work.

The burnt-out house on Shannon bank had been placed by its builders to beautiful advantage; when its eyeless gaps were veritable windows, they must have been well worth looking through. My guide-book of to-day gives no information with regard to the ruin—does not even mention it; but it so happens that I have in my possession an earlier guide-book, published in the eighteen-nineties, which, describing the neighbourhood of

Castleconnell, draws the tourist's attention to Hermitage, the residence of Lord Massey.

I left the ruin of Hermitage and the shrunken rapids of Doonass behind me and came beyond them to a stretch of smooth, deep water where (so it seemed to me) I had once embarked in the ferry for the Limerick bank and the road to Castleconnell village. There was certainly a boat on the opposite bank and a rooftree which I took for the ferryman's. I stood and shouted, I waved my stick and handkerchief, but there came no answering sign of life from the Limerick side of the river; and when my signals had been made ineffectively for ten minutes or so, I surmised that my bump of locality had failed me—the ferry must be further on. There was a doubt in my mind since, from that time on, the path no longer struck me as familiar; still, it was thirty years and more since I had come that way, so it was not to be expected that I should carry every detail in my head. I walked on a mile and I walked on further, but there was never a sign of the ferry-boat; and the trouble was that though there were houses, several houses, on the opposite bank, there was never a house on mine—and save for the old gentleman who mourned the lost salmon, I had met not a soul for the last five miles of my tramp. I began to wonder if any one lived in the neighbourhood this side of O'Brien's Bridge, when I caught a glimpse of a good-sized house standing back from the river amid trees, and, a little further on, struck a footpath turning inland. I followed it, intending to ask my way at the house; it wound through a wood where nothing else was visible, then on, with bushes on either side, till suddenly I realized

that I was walking in a cultivated garden. What had been a cultivated garden, rather; I noticed it only because some of the shrubs that thrust across the path were of the flowering varieties that do not grow untended. It was years, I judged, since a gardener had tended them or scraped the moss from the gravel on which I was walking. The path wound through a shrubbery—the house still invisible—and then to a clearing and a ruin, such as I had never seen before; the ruin of a tennis-court. An asphalt tennis-court, with what had been a wire-netting fence around it; and which, judging by appearances, had been left as it was since the last game was played—Heaven knows how many years before! What remained of the high wire fencing hung from bent metal rods; the poles of the net leaned drunkenly and the net itself was oddments of fluttering string. As for the once smooth asphalt of the court, it was cloven with great cracks through which weeds had thrust up and grown lustily. A queer sight, the ruin of a tennis-court—something incongruous about it!

A few yards past the melancholy tennis-court the path took a turn and I was out in the open: with a park-like demesne spreading out towards the Shannon and, near at hand, the house I had caught distant sight of. After that dead and crumbling playground I had more than half expected to find it, like Hermitage, a windowless shell of a house. But in this I was mistaken—no fire had passed over it; the building was whole, if not sound. In times past it must have been a pleasant country house; two-storied, large-windowed, with a garden that once must have been a delight and glimpses

of Shannon in the distance; now it only needed a glance to be assured it was dead as the burnt-out ruin, its neighbour. So far as I could see, no violence had been offered it; like the asphalt court in the shrubbery, it had merely been left to decay. There were cracks in its plaster and some of the window-panes were broken; but what spoke of death was not so much the structural neglect of the house as its array of withered plants. Never have I seen so much dead vegetation assembled in one place. A conservatory jutted from one end of the building and along one side was a veranda; on the veranda stood a row of large tubs, each one planted with a palm—and those palms, one and all, were so long dead that their leaves were like brown paper. It was the same thing in the conservatory; rows on rows of flower-pots on the shelves and in them the remains of ferns and flowers that had long since been parched to death. Someone who cared for flowers must have lived there once; I judged that from the garden, as well as from the withered plants.

So desolate was the effect of broken windows and dead plants that I took it for granted the house was empty until, in a corner of the veranda, I saw a bicycle—a bicycle obviously the worse for wear but obviously still in use. Being desirous of information concerning my route, as well as curious with regard to the inhabitants of the moribund building, I began to walk round it and, having made half the circuit, discovered one inhabitant: an elderly man seated just inside one of the long windows, perusing an illustrated paper, with spectacles perched on his nose. I tapped on the window, whereupon he rose and eventually appeared at a door.

In answer to my question about the ferry, he said yes, there was one, but I had come much too far; he 'd come out and put me on the path—and put me on the path he did. He was a slow-spoken old gentleman, not of the informative type, and beyond indication of the way I was to take, I got little out of him except that he was doing a caretaking job in the house; I guessed, however, that, when it was occupied, he had been in the service of its owner. Who now, if he lived, was likely enough living exiled from Ireland; one of the class whose old 'ascendancy' has passed. . . . Impossible to write of modern Ireland and ignore its modern antiquities of houses burned and deserted!

From the old man's directions I realized that my memory had not failed me in the matter of the ferry. I had stood and signalled at the right place—the man in charge of the boat must have temporarily deserted his post. I remembered that when I crossed by that ferry, many years before, the old boatman had not only shown me the way to the hotel but, on my invitation, had stayed to drink a glass of beer. That sort of friendly excursion might be a practice with ferrymen who plied to Castleconnell; so, having parted with the caretaker, I made my way hopefully back to the river-path and tramped along it till I came to the spot where, something over an hour before, I had waved and shouted in vain. I repeated the waving and shouting but the result was exactly the same; no one came out of the house among the trees, the boat stayed drawn up to the bank. After a quarter of an hour of useless attempts to attract attention, I came to the conclusion that the ferryman must have taken a day off and I must resign myself to

a trudge back to Limerick; that is to say, to a walk of something like twenty miles, instead of the twelve or so I had intended when I set out. Which, again, was a reminder of rural Ireland under the old dispensation; where, if memory does not fail me, there were similar uncertainties of transport.

This solitary walk of mine was taken on a weekday; on Sundays and holidays there would doubtless have been other visitors to Shannon-side, and the Castleconnell ferry would have been in working order. As it was, I plodded back by the way I had come and was grateful to the old gentleman who lamented the salmon for telling me of a farm-house where tea could be obtained; one of those Irish country teas that you think of enviously when you are served, nearer home, with pretentious little trays of refreshment. Bread, that Irish bread—how do they make it? Butter, farm butter, not scraped on stale slices but set down to take what you will! Same procedure with the jam—home-made, of berries from the garden! Milk that in less generous regions might pass itself off as cream! And tea that was tea, not siftings! (It is remarkable what good and expensive tea is drunk by all classes in Ireland; the Irish farmer's or artisan's wife would scorn to drink the sort of tea that satisfies her opposite number in England.[1]) Having walked, by this time, at least

[1] The following extract from Mr. R. A. Anderson's *With Horace Plunkett in Ireland* bears witness to Irish discrimination in the matter of tea: 'Once, I remember, we [that is to say, the management of a village co-operative store] ran out of the higher-priced teas, for which there was the chief demand. Even the old woman who came in for her "pound of sugar an' ounce of tay" wanted the *very best* tea. The Saxon manager appealed to me, as secretary. I advised

fourteen miles since my Limerick breakfast, I reduced the loaf by several goodly slices and made similar inroads on the butter and the jam before I asked for my bill. Partly, I suppose, because I was hungry, I thought it one of the most excellent meals I had ever partaken of —I may add that it was one of the cheapest. And on the strength of that excellent, economical tea, I trudged my way back to Limerick.

him to put the 3*s.* 4*d* label on the big stock of 1*s* 8*d.* tea we were carrying. He did so, and it sold like hot cakes! It is only in the very far west that the old tea-drinkers can't be fooled by labels. There they pay up to 5*s* a pound for "tay." But *they* are judges, and any tea merchant will tell you that the western peasant buys the best tea that Mincing Lane can provide. It is their sole luxury. If they drink its infusion, or rather decoction, in their own way, a way that would poison us, they still drink a liquor which is produced from tea of a grade which the middle-class housewife considers too dear.'

VI. CORPSES AND SURVIVALS

COUNTRY houses were by no means the only buildings that went up in flames in the era euphemistically known as the 'Troubles'; bridges were suddenly removed with explosive, while barracks, both police and military, were favourite material for bonfires. Military barracks, in all cases I believe, were left whole and sound when their British garrisons marched out; destruction was wrought later by one or other of the parties to the civil war. This was a war conducted entirely on guerrilla lines, by raids and sniping behind hedges and destruction of property, rather than by regular engagements; [1] and it seems to have been a practice to burn down barracks, in order to prevent their occupation by the opposite party, as a stronghold. Of Fermoy barracks, reduced to ruin, I have spoken in an earlier chapter; and not long after I had seen what remains of them, in the company of some friends who drove me out from Cork, I had tea beside the ruins of a home of my very early infancy—Charles Fort at Kinsale. Barring the fact that they have been dismantled, the actual fortifications, no doubt, are much as they were in the day of British occupation; stone and concrete are not inflammable substances; but all that was inflammable in the way of building, by one set of combatants or the other, had been given over to the flames. Nowadays, in fine weather, Charles Fort is

[1] The nearest approach to a real engagement of opposing Irish forces would seem to have been the brief battle that ended in the destruction of the Four Courts.

Rev. J. Hobson

GOSSIPS AT KINSALE, CO. CORK

a favourite spot with the picnicker hailing from Cork; as well it may be, with its westward view over the harbour and along the coast to the Old Head of Kinsale —which saw the *Lusitania* die!

The story of the *Lusitania* is not the only tragic page of history that has been writ within sight of Kinsale. There was a day in the year 1601 when the fate of Ireland, for centuries to come, was decided outside its walls. Charles Fort in those days had not come into existence, but the town itself was a fortress and reckoned of no mean strength; and, as allies of the Irish, who had risen in force against Elizabeth's rule, three thousand Spaniards, under Juan de Aquila, landed and took possession. Mountjoy, Elizabeth's Lord Deputy, marched against him and camped outside the town with an army of some twelve thousand; fortunately for him the Spanish general, in landing where he did, had committed a cardinal error. The strength of the Irish insurrection lay in the north, with the Ulster chieftains, the two famous Hughs—Hugh O'Neill and Red Hugh O'Donnell; and had Aquila and his followers landed on the Ulster instead of the Munster coast, the fortune of war might well have gone the other way—the two Hughs, so far, had been more than a match for the armed forces of Elizabeth. As it was, in order to effect a junction with their allies, the Irish forces had to march to the extreme south; this they did and, arriving before Kinsale, proceeded to besiege the besiegers. Here again opportunities were lost and blunders made; the Irish leaders would have been well advised to play a waiting game till the enemy, whom their arrival had cut off from his sources of supply, was weakened by hunger and disease. But the

Spanish commander, shut up in Kinsale, sent urgent requests for immediate relief and, though counsels were divided in the Irish command—one Hugh was for waiting, the other for action—in the end it was determined to make a night attack on the English camp. The attack was a failure; as some say by treachery, as some say by blundering ignorance of the guides, the night marchers took the wrong road; in consequence they arrived not in dark but by daylight and Mountjoy's soldiers, who should have been taken by surprise, had warning of their coming and were drawn up ready for battle. Finding their plan of surprise had miscarried, the Irish army began to fall back in some confusion and were thereupon attacked by Mountjoy, who speedily put them to rout. The English victory was complete and its fruits were not only the immediate retreat of the Irish army and the surrender of the Spanish allies; more important still was the departure from Ireland of the dangerous Red Hugh O'Donnell and the subsequent submission of the other chieftains of Ulster. Their submission meant the end of the stubborn Irish wars which had raged with varying fortune throughout the reign of Elizabeth. Red Hugh O'Donnell and his fellow O'Neill had come nearer to success, much nearer, than any other leaders of Irish revolt; but the rout of Kinsale was the end and the death-blow to their hopes. . . . Best part of a century later, and again a trial of strength against England had its Irish beginnings at Kinsale. James, who for three years had been James II, in March of the year 1689 landed in Kinsale Harbour—with arms, ammunition, money, and men supplied him by Louis of France. It was sixteen months later, in July 1690, when again

he passed through the town of Kinsale, on his fugitive way back to France; the Battle of the Boyne behind him and his cause irretrievably lost.

. . . . . .

It is, I think, Mr. Stephen Gwynn who has somewhere remarked that the characteristic architecture of Ireland is a ruin. There is a lot of truth in the statement; Irishmen have long been accustomed to the company of ruins and that, I suppose, is the reason why nobody seems to worry about the numerous architectural corpses—or perhaps one should say architectural skeletons—which were scattered round the country by the 'Troubles.' Remains of barracks or remains of houses—they just stand! As there is a strong similarity about most of their stories of destruction, there is only one more to which I shall specially refer because it was twice related to me and from two different points of view—Anglo-Irish of the old dispensation, and upholder of the I.R.A.—and because, also, such contrasting accounts are not rare. The ruin in question, in its pre-ruin days, was a barrack of the Royal Irish Constabulary; it was attacked by a force of patriot-rebels and, after a bout of fierce fighting, taken and burned. The Sinn Fein version of the story was a saga in praise of Irish heroes; it dwelt only on the exploits of the attacking rebels and the gallantry whereby they had forced their opponents to surrender. But the other story, the loyalist story, included an ugly episode of which Sinn Fein had made no mention. It concerned two constables of the R.I.C., so badly wounded that they were unable to move; and whom—despite the

entreaties of their surrendered comrades—the victors left to perish in the flames. . . . I set the two versions on paper and leave it at that!

. . . . . .

When you take the main road through Phoenix Park, you will pass a building that is undoubtedly dead, though it bears no outward sign of ruin; an unpretentious building, pleasantly situated, formerly the Viceregal Lodge and henceforth a museum. A corpse which, in its lifetime, had its ups and downs; beginning humbly as a ranger's lodge, at the latter end of the eighteenth century it was purchased by the Government for the uses of the Irish Viceroy. Just a century later, in 1882, history was made on the road near by, when Lord Frederick Cavendish, newly appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Thomas Burke, the Under-Secretary, were stabbed by a gang of 'Invincibles.' The murder was fully as stupid as brutal; Cavendish, whose identity was unknown to the conspirators, was killed only because he was in the company of Burke, their destined prey, and did his best to defend him. To Parnell and his followers the crime was a heavy blow, setting back their work for years by the horror it excited in England; and its political consequences were the more lamentable because the appointment of Cavendish to the secretaryship in itself was a step towards conciliation, a definite sign that the era of coercion was past.

With the creation of the Free State the old administrative connection lapsed and with it the dignity of Viceroy; the lodge in Phoenix Park also changed its designation and, for a time, was the Governor-General's.

For a time only, while moderate counsels prevailed. When Fianna Fail was voted into power, the position of the Governor-General was made, to say the least of it, difficult for any self-respecting statesman. If, however, you are a person with no particular sense of your own dignity or that of your office, there is a good deal to be said for the position of Governor-General to-day—it must be one of the easiest jobs on record. There is, I understand, absolutely nothing for the Governor-General to do except draw the salary allotted him. As he is supposed, in some way or other, to represent the authority of the British Crown, I imagine that any sign of activity on his part, even the slightest, would be sternly repressed on the instant. It was once suggested, in my hearing, that his expenses, in connection with his office, must be somewhere about sixpence a day; expenditure which would leave him a comfortable margin from his salary of £10,000. Since I left Ireland his title, I believe, has undergone another change, from Governor-General to Seneschal; I have no information as to the precise significance of the alteration, but the probabilities are that if it denotes anything at all, it denotes an added degree of insignificance. The present holder of the dignity is doubtless an estimable citizen, but even in his native Ireland it has never been asserted that he is known to fame. By name he is a Mr. Donald Buckley, but when Mr. de Valera defends his official existence in the Dail—as, on occasions, he is forced to do—he calls him Mr. Domhnall va Buachalla. (I think that is the way he would spell it.) As the objections to Mr. Buckley are usually—and not unreasonably—on the ground of unnecessary expenditure of public money;

and as the Government's own needs may call for economies, it is highly probable that in the not distant future the office of Governor-General, or Seneschal, will lapse—it may even have lapsed before these words are in print! It should be noted, however, that it came in useful, as an excuse for avoiding the proclamation of King Edward in the Free State; Mr. de Valera explaining that, as the Governor-General had sworn allegiance to King George and his heirs, such proclamation was unnecessary. Having realized that the office has its advantages, it may be that the Free State Government will put up with it for the present.

Meanwhile the representative of the British Crown has ceased to occupy the ex-Viceregal Lodge and lives in a retirement so unostentatious that it took some inquiry on my part before I could discover his whereabouts. One or two Dubliners to whom I put my question knew vaguely that it was somewhere in Kingstown—otherwise Dun Laoghaire; finally someone directed me more precisely—his address was De Vesci Terrace. Accordingly, a few days later when I happened to be in Kingstown, I bethought me of the Governor-General's neighbourhood and turned off the main road into De Vesci Terrace—one of those terraces, dignified and pleasant, whose English equivalents can be found in Cheltenham or Bath or old Brighton. At the end of the terrace, and detached from it, I discovered my goal, a suburban residence of the old Dublin type. Comfortable-looking, well-proportioned, like most houses of its period, and with a nice bit of garden behind its high wall; but not in aggressively good repair—its frontage would have been the better for attention from the local

plasterer. I knew it at once for the official residence of the Governor-General from the fact that just inside the gate there stood a sentry-box—an unofficial-looking sentry-box, anything but smart—and beside it a solitary young policeman who, if his expression did not belie him, was feeling more than common bored. I asked him the way to somewhere or other, not because I had any real need to know but with the intention of starting a conversation and perhaps finding out what were his views on the subject of Governors-General; unfortunately, however, the rain, which had been threatening for some time past, chose that moment to come down with sudden heaviness, and the policeman retreated within his hutch while I sped off in search of shelter. . . . I never met any one who had seen Mr. Donald Buckley or knew much about him, except the legend that when the American ambassador paid a ceremonious call the door was opened by the Governor-General in his shirt-sleeves.

Mr. de Valera's house—nearer to Dublin, in the residential district of Blackrock—is far more strongly guarded than that of the Governor-General. So far as I could see, nothing in the way of official pomp but obvious detectives round the gate. There is doubtless good reason for these differing degrees of protection: it is more than possible that some politically minded Irishman might be sufficiently wrought up to fall upon Eamon de Valera with violence; while it is highly improbable that any one in Ireland, whatever his politics, would think it worth while to wreak vengeance on Mr. Donald Buckley.

. . . . . .

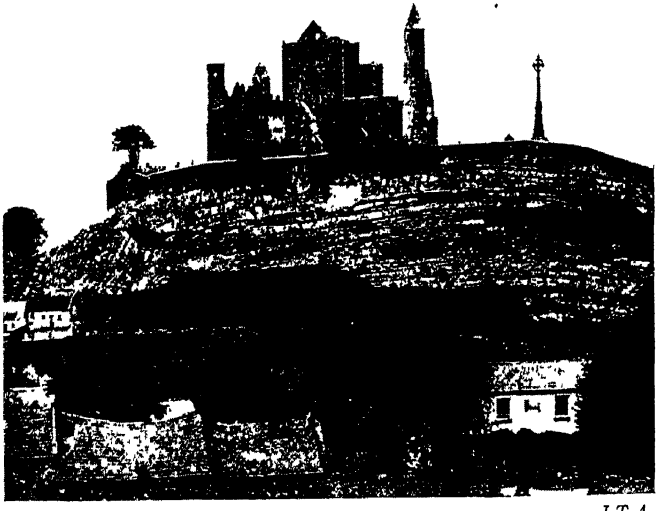
In the last days of May it happened I was staying in Cork; and on one of those days, the twenty-fourth of the month, my friends drove me out to Cobh, which, a century ago, bore the same name, differently spelt; it was Cove, the Cove of Cork, until 1849, when it changed its name to Queenstown, in honour of Victoria. Since the Free State has scant reverence for British monarchy, the harbour city reverted to its old designation—the change in spelling being necessitated by the fact that the Gaelic alphabet does not possess the letter V. As we neared it we beheld, at anchor near the Yacht Club, a survival of times past, in the shape of a low grey hull; a destroyer flying the white ensign. More—because the day was May 24—she was a-flutter with joyful little flags.

That destroyer at anchor in the harbour of Cobh is sign and token of one of the grievances of Republican Ireland: the fact that, by the terms of the treaty of 1921, the British army and navy still have right to a footing in certain corners of the Free State and right of entry to certain of its territorial waters. In addition to the British destroyers that come and go, there are British engineers and gunners quartered on Spike Island, which lies at the mouth of Cork Harbour. In the north, on Lough Swilly, is another such naval-military settlement, and there is a third on the western coast. This, the last remnant of imperial authority, I have heard bitterly resented by Republican speakers.[1] On the

[1] As a matter of fact it is not quite the last remnant; the British Board of Trade still makes itself responsible (through the Irish Lights Office) for the upkeep of Free State lighthouses, as well as for those of Northern Ireland. By international convention, every State is responsible for the lighting of its own coasts; but—so, at least, it

I.T.A.

COBH (QUEENSTOWN)



I.T.A.

THE ROCK OF CASHEL, CO. TIPPERARY

other hand, it is more than possible that elder tradesmen of Cork and its adjacent dockyards—however thorough their Irish patriotism—may find it in their heart to regret, now and then, the passing of the naval and military custom which meant good money in their pockets. Perhaps it was some such memory that accounted in part for the outspoken loyalty of a lady in whose shop I made some small purchases and who, as soon as she learned I was English, volunteered her regret that the Jubilee gift to King George from the Southern loyalists had not been more widely advertised. There were so many, she said, who had heard of the gift too late and who, had they only known of it in time, would gladly have subscribed their mite. And it may be that old loyalty was kept warm in her heart by the pressing grievance of the Free State tariff, which was making it more and more difficult to restock her shop with fancy goods.

As to what is the proportion of Irish loyalists to their nationalist fellow-citizens of the Free State I have no idea; but whatever their numbers, they are likely to decrease as time goes on. The new order, the march of events, is against them. It is not only a case of the younger generation growing up with a new outlook, an acceptance of the world as it is; in so far as the loyalists belong to the old 'Protestant ascendancy' they have no

was put to me by a member of the Northern Government—'rather than run the risk of injury to shipping' Great Britain has shouldered the Free State's duties and responsibilities—pays and appoints to posts. The fact that the yearly cost of Irish coastwise lights runs to about £250,000 is perhaps the reason why there is so little open protest against British control of the service.

place in the present dispensation. Everywhere in Europe the landowning class has lost its old wealth and authority, but in Ireland it has lost something more—lost it, in part, by reason of its race, in part by reason of its faith. By no means all Catholics are nationalists, by no means all Protestants loyalists; still, the average Protestant is more likely than the average Catholic to look back with regret on times past. For one thing, there are parts of the country, and walks of life, in which Protestants, rightly or wrongly, believe themselves heavily handicapped, as against their Catholic fellow-citizens; on one occasion a certain professor was pointed out to me as the last Protestant who would ever be appointed to a well-known educational institution; when in due time he retired from his post, Catholicism would see to it that his place was filled by a candidate of the dominant faith. Then, in the landed and professional classes, whether Catholic or Protestant, one of the effects of the Irish language cult is to send the younger generation out of Ireland for its schooling, and so bar it from the service of the State. Proficiency in Irish is a condition of appointment in the State service and in all such professions as entail the passing of examinations; but proficiency in Irish is a useless accomplishment anywhere but in the Irish Free State—and, to many of those who acquire it there, useful only as a means of obtaining appointments. Even when there is no question of loyalist prejudice, it is not to be wondered at that parents belonging to the landed and professional classes should often prefer to send their sons to English schools rather than give them an education which will handicap them badly with regard to the outside world while it fits them only for a narrow range

of Irish advancement. It is inevitable that a considerable percentage of the lads so educated—being barred from many callings in their native country—will earn their bread and live their lives elsewhere; and they themselves—their descendants certainly—will cease to be even Anglo-Irish. It may be this draining away of the Anglo-Irish element will make for the greater peace of the country they leave; for, as one Irishman insisted to me—and though he spoke jestingly there was truth in his jest—it was the Anglo-Irishman who, more often than not, raised the standard of revolt against authority.[1]

. . . . . .

With regard to the number of loyalists in the city of Dublin, here, again, I have no precise information; but I judge that they cannot be few and far between since they support an odd little company of musicians, labelled British ex-service men, who perambulate the streets with a small repertoire of patriotic melody—British patriotic, not Irish. This includes a hymn tune, *Land of Hope and Glory*, *God Save the King*, and not much else. It is possible they may gather in occasional halfpence from the younger generation of nationalist Ireland, who may be unfamiliar with the strains of *God Save the King*; but their main source of income, I doubt not, is the pocket of the Dublin loyalist. Apparently it keeps them going; and in Jubilee week, I imagine, they did well with the national anthem.

[1] For example, Parnell and Wolfe Tone; while it is interesting to note that Patrick Pearse—hero and martyr of the Post Office rebellion and enthusiast for the Irish language—was Irish only on the mother's side.

VII. THE IRISH HATE-CULT

It is a sober fact (and also an unfortunate) that, where human beings in the mass are concerned, no bond can hold them together like the bond of a common enmity. It is easier to share our dislikes with a multitude than it is to share our affections, and when one comes to think of it, all organizations have their beginnings in enmity or fear—in their essence they are fighting machines, even organizations whose activities are wholly beneficent. We combine against disease, the enemy to health; we combine, in societies or parties, to overthrow abuse or injustice. We organize ourselves into communities—states and trade unions—and submit to the orders and exactions of those in authority because freedom to follow our own desires is, for most of us, too dangerous a luxury. In a world without violence, disease, or hatred, there would be very little need of societies or parties; in such a world, without fear of danger, we could live the life unorganized.

To have even the slightest understanding of Ireland's politics and Ireland's relation to her neighbour, it is necessary to realize this binding power of a common enmity. Ireland to-day is inhabited by a people for the most part desirous of attaining to the unity of nationhood but meanwhile riven by faction and confounded by its own intolerance; and, human nature being what it is, it is inevitable that those who are endeavouring to damp down the fires of internal quarrel should rouse and

encourage a hatred of the alien enemy. Irishmen who, on matters of internal policy, would be fiercely divided, can be at one in this: their denunciation of England. The endeavour to achieve unity by the bond of hatred is by no means peculiar to Irish politicians; it is made more or less instinctively, more or less consciously, by politicians of all peoples, languages, and classes, when desirous of uniting their followers—from dictators warning against envious democracy or bloodthirsty *bourgeoisie* to presidents of trade union conferences denouncing the capitalist sinner. If the hate-note is perennially stressed by the Irish politician, it is not only on account of his country's grievances—which in times past have admittedly been cruel; the bitterness and frequency of Irish faction has, so far, made it needful to stress it. How else but by recalling the manifold sins of England against Ireland can Irishmen be induced to forget their manifold quarrels with each other?

. . . . . .

I have used the word 'cult' in the heading of this chapter deliberately; its use seems to me justified. Ireland is one of the modern nations—the too-numerous nations—where antagonism towards other races is educationally instilled into the child-mind. One may acknowledge many offences on the part of England against Ireland and esteem it natural that youth should have its jingo enthusiasms; one may realize that—history being what it is—Irish jingo enthusiasm is bound to shake its fist against its English neighbours; and all the same regret certain educational influences. Regret, for instance, that a collection of verse, written in times past

by contributors to the Irish *Nation*[1]—a collection abounding in hymns of hate—should be used nowadays as a school-book. Like so much that is Irish, it encourages the perpetuation of ancient wrong; not the burying but the digging up of hatchets. As an example, the following, *England's Ultimatum*:

Slaves! lie down and kiss your chains.
To the Union yield in quiet;
Were it hemlock in your veins,
Stand it must—we profit by it.

English foot on Irish neck,
English gyve on Irish sinew,
Ireland swayed at England's beck—
So it is and shall continue.

English foot on Irish neck,
Pine or rot, meanwhile, we care not;
Little will we pause to reck
How you writhe, while rise you dare not.

Argue with you!—stoop to show
Our dominion's just foundation—
Savage Celts! and dare you so
Task the lords of half creation?

Argue! do not ask again—
Proofs there are enough to sway you;
Three and twenty thousand men,
Whom a word will loose to slay you.

[1] The organ of the Young Ireland movement, founded in 1842 by Charles Gavan Duffy, Thomas Osborne Davis, and John Blake Dillon.

Store of arguments besides
  In their time we will exhibit—
Loaded thongs for rebel hides,
  Flaming thatch and burthened gibbet.

Bid your fathers tell how we
  Proved our rights in bygone seasons.
Slaves! and sons of slaves—your knee
  Bow to *sister* England's reasons.

By the way, there is one item in this patriotic collection of verse—an item entitled *The Sword*—which set me wondering what would be the mental reaction towards it of those careful educationists on our side the Irish Sea who will not permit one of the verses of *God Save the King* to contaminate the lips of youth. For their benefit (if any such open these pages) I set down a couple of stanzas:

What rights the brave?
    The sword!
What frees the slave?
    The sword!
What cleaves in twain
The despot's chain,
And makes his gyves and dungeons vain?
    The sword!

Chorus

Then cease thy proud task never,
While rests a link to sever!
  Guard of the free,
  We 'll cherish thee
And keep thee bright for ever!

What checks the knave?
The sword!
What smites to save?
The sword!
What wreaks the wrong,
Unpunished long,
At last upon the guilty strong?
The sword!

Chorus

Then cease thy proud task never, etc.

After such an example of red-blooded virulence, our

Confound their politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks

strikes one as a very poor attempt! As it does when compared with another poem in the same volume, entitled *A Song of the Penal Days*:

Around my *clairseach's* speaking measures
Men, like their fathers tall, arise.
Their heart the same deep hatred treasures—
I read it in their kindling eyes!
The same proud brow to frown at danger—
The same long *coulin's* graceful flow—
The same dear tongue to curse the stranger—
Ma chreevin evin alga, O!

'The same dear tongue to curse the stranger.' . . . Whatever the wrongs of Ireland in the past, one doubts if it is wise to rear the youthful mind on this form of political diet.

Such being the songs taught to Irish youngsters, it goes without saying that the teaching of Anglo-Irish

history is not always characterized by restraint. Often enough the English race, as portrayed to the young, is a race without redeeming quality; addicted, through the centuries, to more than oppression, to massacre and brutal persecution. Black shadows demand high lights as complement; excesses on the Irish side are either ignored, denied, or excused as natural outbursts on the part of a people habitually oppressed and terrorized. A historian [1] who writes of the formidable Sean O'Neill, the opponent of Elizabeth—in Irish, Sean a' Diomais, or the Proud—admits that the vengeance he wrought on his enemies was dire and that 'his bitterness against the foreigner was so fierce that he would strike down any man who dared in his presence to speak an English word. He is said to have hanged a man for eating an English biscuit.' Although the historian does not actually ask his young readers to admire in O'Neill the quality of ruthlessness which he has elsewhere denounced in his opponents, he hastens to counteract any disapproval of the Irish hero by remarking that 'Those who dislike Sean a' Diomais because he loved not the English, and because he defeated and punished the English so severely, dwell upon the fact that he was a cruel man and a bad man morally; but surely that man could not be so very bad who made it a rule of his life, as Sean admittedly did, never to take a morsel of any meal to which he sat down till he had first taken a slice or portion and sent it to a beggar at his gate, saying: "It is meet to serve Christ first." '

As for the rising of 1641, in which, according to other historians, the Irish got a bit of their own back, in the

[1] Seumas MacManus in *A Short Story of the Irish Race.*

way of Protestant massacre—our historian treats these records of his colleagues as slanders upon Ireland's fair fame. The fable that the rising in the north was accompanied by massacre was, as we should say, propaganda. 'Some months after the first outbreak a story was circulated in England for the purpose of inciting the English people to frenzied vengeance upon the Irish—that on the night of the 23rd of October, and in the days that followed, many thousands of English had been massacred. Almost down to the present day English people have spoken and English historians have written of what they call "the great Popish massacre." . . . Undoubtedly, in a great upheaval of a people, robbed of their all and hunted like animals into the bogs and the mountains, it is only to be expected that there should be many lives taken in revenge; yet in truth the Irish people, suddenly rising up from their servitude and coming into power again, showed unprecedented restraint and displayed mercy towards those who had robbed them. In the report of the rising made by the Lords Justices, ten or twelve days after the event, there is no mention whatever of a massacre.'

This massacre of 1641 is still a controversial subject; as shown above, to the Irish historian it is sometimes an alleged massacre. In the collection of verse from which quotation has already been made there is a poem by Gavan Duffy, *The Muster of the North,* in honour of the rising of that year—which at first was dramatically successful. The poem is headed by a note which states: 'We deny and always have denied the alleged massacre of 1641. But that the people rose under their chiefs, seized the English towns, and expelled the English

settlers, and in doing so committed many excesses, is undeniable—as is also the desperate provocation.'

In their *Short History of the Irish People* two modern Irish historians—Professor Mary Hayden and George A. Moonan—are less sure of Irish blamelessness. 'What number actually perished, either murdered by rebels or in consequence of the treatment which they received, is a question which has often been debated, and on which no certain decision can be arrived at. The best authorities, after careful investigation of the extant evidence, have arrived at a total of about four thousand actually slain—otherwise, of course, than in battle—and perhaps seven thousand or eight thousand who lost their lives by cold and hunger. They consider that, straining all points, these figures are the highest that can possibly be maintained.'

It goes without saying that the reports current in England at the time were often grossly exaggerated. If the numbers of massacred had attained the huge total suggested by rumour there would have been few Protestants left in Ireland to carry on against the insurgents. It should be mentioned, however, that exaggeration was not only on the side of the Protestant. 'The Jesuit Cornelius O'Mahony, writing in 1645, exultingly testifies that over a hundred thousand heretics had been killed.' [1] But even if the massacred amounted to no more than eleven or twelve thousand, and the murderous exploits of Phelim O'Neill and his followers must be greatly discounted by the sober historian: even so it is comprehensible enough that the purveyor of propagandist history to the Irish child should prefer to deny

[1] Murray and Law, *Ireland* (The Nations of To-day Series).

it altogether. Cromwell, when he laid his heavy hand on Ireland, said that he had come 'to take account of the innocent blood that had been shed.' But if there had been no Ulster massacre, that was merely his excuse for savagery.

. . . . . .

Coming down to more modern days and the conflicts that preceded and succeeded the treaty, the account given in Seumas MacManus's little volume is, I think, fairly typical of Nationalist teaching on the subject.

'Then began the British Government's attempt, with its army and its Black and Tans and Auxiliaries, to break Sinn Fein and coerce Ireland again into subservience. The small body of volunteers which now formed the Irish Republican Army fought an heroic guerrilla warfare—one of the most gallant fights known to history—against England's army and its irregulars, the Black and Tans and the Auxiliaries, who sought to terrorize the country and break the fighter's spirit by a course of dreadful repression. . . .

'It was claimed by British authorities that these outrages were "reprisals"—acts done in retaliation for the killing of their comrades, the attacks and ambushes on the Royal Irish Constabulary and on the forces and officials of the Crown, which were of frequent occurrence in the intensive form of guerrilla warfare that was now being carried on. But all the cruel things done to the Irish people not merely failed to quench the Irish spirit but fanned it into fiercer flame.' . . . It is not, I think, inadmissible to contrast the condemnation of outrage and 'dreadful repression' perpetrated by British

combatants with the mild explanation that similar proceedings 'were of frequent occurrence in the intensive form of guerrilla warfare' carried on by the soldiers of Ireland.

Advisedly, no doubt, the authors of the *Short History of the Irish People* have touched but lightly on the damage that Irishmen wrought on each other in the course of the internecine conflict that followed the signing of the treaty and withdrawal of the British garrison. It is explained that, after the treaty had been endorsed in the Dail by a small majority, the Sinn Fein party was unfortunately 'divided into two sections, one party called the Treatyites, or Free State, section, and the other party the Anti-Treatyites, or Republicans. In the summer of 1922 a civil war broke out between the Government party, the Treatyites, and the Anti-Treatyites, or Republicans—a war which developed into a bitter fight, causing the country much suffering, and wherein some of the best men on both sides lost their lives. After about a year's fighting—in the midst of which Griffith died suddenly and Collins was killed in action [1]—the civil war ended with the Treatyites in control of the Saorstat.'

Once only, in this particular volume, did I come across an allusion to England that was not tinged with enmity. In a paragraph dealing with the famine it is

[1] That is to say, he was ambushed and shot, on a road in County Cork, by a party of the opposite faction. A guide-book in my possession—whose author, presumably, has Treatyite leanings—calls it 'ambushed and murdered.' Whatever the ethics of the killing, a monument on the Dunmanway road marks the spot where it took place.

admitted that in England, as elsewhere, 'many private individuals subscribed to help the sufferers'; but the admission is qualified by the statement that 'the English Government gave practically no help until the famine was far advanced.'[1]

. . . . . .

[1] It was a tragic misfortune, for England as well as for Ireland, that the epoch of potato-blight in the one country, in the other was the epoch of triumph for the doctrines of Cobden and Bright. 'The Liberals' (I quote from Stirling Taylor's *Modern History of England*) 'made this new principle of economic freedom into one of those most fabulous of superstitions that have sometimes seized the human mind. . . . Faced by the appalling facts of the Irish famine, the *laisser-faire* Tory Peel and the Whig Russell and his ministers were alike in the grip of a political philosophy which forbade them to interfere with the right of the individual to take his personal profit before the State was allowed to take any action. As the Irishman, Sir Gavan Duffy, said, the famine itself was aggravated by the landlords *exporting* their corn to the English markets for profit. The obvious first step was to forbid this export, which took away food from the starving peasants who had grown it. . . . But . . . the new political economists had convinced the new statesmen that it was the grossest of political sins to interfere with the business arrangements of the commercial and manufacturing magnates. Peel had bought Indian corn to feed the Irish (at a nominal price) out of the public funds. The Russell Government said this should be left to private enterprise, working for a profit. . . . There were economists who would seem to have preferred that the peasants should starve rather than tamper with the sacred principles of private enterprise.' There is no reason to suppose that this latter statement is exaggerated; we have our modern politicians and economists who have preferred that peasants should starve by the million rather than tamper with another set of sacred principles—this time of collective enterprise. When the human being once gets a sacred dogma fixed firmly in his head there is no limit to his ruthlessness—or his stupidity. Only the product of a hate-cult would represent the

I do not pretend to have an exhaustive knowledge of Anglo-Irish history as taught to the young; but the little volume by Seumas MacManus is not the only one I have picked up at random, to find that its young readers are presented, on the one hand, with a conception of England as a nation altogether evil; and on the other with a legendary Ireland of almost impossible virtue, an Ireland whose many misfortunes were due entirely to the malice of the foreigner, never to failings of her own. It can scarcely be denied that history, taught in such a manner, is a contribution to the national hate-cult of England. The Irish Free State is by no means the only country where dislike and suspicion of the foreigner are instilled into the young, as part of the school curriculum; but in the Irish Free State dislike and suspicion are concentrated always and intensely on one race—for geographical as well as historical reasons. It is a rule, with few, if any, real exceptions, that neighbour states tend to mutual dislike and quarrel; and Ireland, by reason of her sea-girt position on the

blunders of the Government, in its dealing with the famine, as deliberate crimes; even unhampered by Cobdenite principles its task would have been colossal, in a country vastly over-populated and where lack of communications often hampered the work of relief. But, Ireland being Ireland, it is perhaps inevitable that the niggard blunders of a British Government should be remembered when the kinder help given by a British public is forgotten or all but forgotten. The ships that sailed from a famine-stricken country with food in their holds—they are nearer and clearer to the Irish memory than the other ships that brought food in.

My object here is to state Irish opinion, not to confute it; still, in connection with the subject of famine relief, it is, I think, permissible to cite Daniel O'Connell: 'The noblest generosity is evinced by multitudes of the English.'

outskirts of a continent, has only one neighbour state to quarrel with. Even if there were no ancient grievance to cast up against her, the combative instinct of the Irish people would inevitably seek outlet in dispute with Great Britain. And the enmity which is merely geographical in origin—like the historical enmity born of ancient grievance—is constantly stimulated by the need to divert national energy from the internecine quarrel to which Irishmen have always been addicted.

It would be doing the Irishman a real injustice to conclude that his darling hatred of the British, as a nation, is vented on the individual Briton. On the contrary—oddly on the contrary. The tourist is unlikely to complete his travels without sight of inimical inscriptions chalked up on walls—'Boycott British Goods' is a mild specimen of the same; and unless he entirely neglects the Republican Press, he will certainly come across virulent abuse of his country. Himself, however, will be treated with all friendliness by more than the shopkeeping, innkeeping class to whom the tourist is a source of profit. I have never found that the disclosure of my nationality, in train or coach, introduced any element of coolness into casually made acquaintance. And I am not the only tourist to be struck by the contrast; Mr. John Gibbons who, some years ago, wrote a jolly little book entitled *Tramping through Ireland,* tells of an evening in an Irish public-house where an old man began to sing ballads of which some 'must have come down from the Rebellion times of 1798, and one of them was about the potato-famine of the eighteen-forties and how we English starved the

Irish. The odd thing was that the old man apologized to me before each song and then went on to sing it. All about English soldiers being tyrants and despots and things, and once, I know, we were "demons." And to nearly all these things the people knew the chorus and sang it. . . . I put it genially to the man next to me that he sang as if he really meant it. "But I do mean it," he said, "and so does every one else in this room. . . . But," the man went on, "my hating England does not mean that I hate the English." . . . A not dissimilar experience came my way when I had tea with a well-known Republican extremist, a woman who, in and out of season, inveighs against the British connection. Over our tea and our buttered buns she told me, in no measured language, what she thought of my country and its conduct to her own, at the same time treating me with hospitable friendliness and breaking off from her indictment to assure me that there were many English people she liked and admired and several she could count among her friends. She was one with 'Dev' on the policy of making her country stand alone, in complete independence of the products of the outside world, but there her agreement with him ended; to her he was a backslider whom she heartily despised for his refusal to take the republican plunge and openly cut loose from the empire. Considering what she thought of the empire, its builders and rulers, I was not surprised by her ardent desire to be quit of them. Everything that had ever gone wrong in Ireland—everything that was now going wrong—was the result of British self-seeking or British malignity. The annuities trouble and the consequent plight of the cattle farmer had its origin

not in Fianna Fail's policy but in 'beef for the British breakfast-table'; the Irish farmer had been encouraged to produce cattle for the British market instead of growing corn for his countrymen. (It was on the tip of my tongue to suggest that, whatever we had for our English breakfast nowadays, it wasn't beef; but having come to hear and not to offer comment, I carefully held my peace.) In accordance with frequent Irish custom, the misdeeds of bygone English monarchs—particularly those of Queen Elizabeth—were held up for condemnation. Once, for a few moments, the conversation strayed from Ireland to Italy and I happened to mention the Fascist law against begging; whereupon my hostess exclaimed with indignation that such laws were a disgrace, framed against the poor in the interests of the rich. They all began, she said, with Queen Elizabeth and her father, Henry VIII, after they had abolished the monasteries. I did then venture to suggest it was not very likely that Mussolini and his Fascist Grand Council should look up the statutes of English Queen Elizabeth for precedents, and the suggestion, I am glad to say, was accepted in a friendly spirit; my hostess agreed, it was unlikely.

Hatred is not a constructive temper, and the inevitable effect of the Irish hate-cult must be to throw difficulties in the way of any Irish statesman who wishes for the good relations with Great Britain which would often be of practical advantage to his own people. It is likely enough that the motive behind most of the small insults offered to British monarchy and government is fear of being thought deficient in hatred and defiance

of Great Britain.[1] The fear is no idle one; in the opinion of a section of the population—which appears to be large and is certainly vocal—no more damning accusation than friendliness towards a British government can be brought against an Irish politician. Even local politicians, in their small way of business, are afraid of such an accusation. I was told of a local authority which passed a resolution with regard to the compulsory use of the Irish language, a resolution which most of those present (so said my informant) looked on as impracticable and therefore voted with reluctance, but which the majority did not venture to oppose, lest the taunt of 'imperialism' should be flung at them. When the first need of a community—class, party, or nation—is to damage some other class, party, or nation, its own interests, taking a secondary place, will be bound, on occasion, to suffer; and I imagine that most unprejudiced observers would agree that that has been the case in Ireland. If appearances be not deceptive, even Mr. de Valera, determined as he is to break free of British influence—Mr. de Valera who once thanked God that the British market was done with—has sometimes been embarrassed, since he came to power, by the need of damaging the alien rather than advantaging his countrymen. The little olive-branch he tendered, in the shape of a suggestion that an Irish republic, in the event of Great Britain being involved in war, would

[1] The Hon. Frank Pakenham, who writes with authority of Mr. de Valera, describes him as 'a great prince of public and private courtesy'; that being so, it is more than probable that he is personally regretful of some of the small insults which policy has obliged him to authorize.

not permit her territory to be used as a hostile base: that suggestion brought down on the president's head the wrath of General O'Duffy of the Blue Shirts—righteously indignant at the mere idea that Ireland's liberty of belligerent action should be in any way compromised or hampered. Nor was General O'Duffy's the only voice raised in protest; I myself formed one of the crowd at an open-air meeting held on College Green, Dublin, where I heard some whole-hearted abuse of the British nation and where (as I gathered next day from a Republican organ) the following resolution was passed 'by acclamation':

'ENGLAND'S DIFFICULTY

'We, on behalf of the Republicans of Dublin, repudiate the promise made by Mr. de Valera to the British Government that Ireland would not assist the enemies of England in the case of war.

'Strategical points of military importance, north and south, are occupied by English forces which make Ireland's neutrality, in the event of war, impossible. While Ireland is unfree, all Nationalists will realize that England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity.

'On behalf of the Republicans of Ireland, we wish to make it known to the British Government and to the nations of the world that Nationalist Ireland will do everything in its power, in the case of war, to bring about the defeat of England and thus to undo the Conquest.

'Promises to do otherwise made by politicians on behalf of Ireland to the British Government are not, as experience has shown, worth the paper they are written on.

'We appeal to the people of Ireland, irrespective of creed or party, to repudiate Mr. de Valera's undertaking to the British Government.'

So the resolution; and it was, as I have said, from the columns of an extremist little paper, *An Phoblacht*, that I obtained its text in full: also the information that the meeting was enthusiastic and numbered about five thousand. From another section of the Press, less violently Republican and therefore more favourable to the Government, I obtained the counter-information that the meeting was not enthusiastic and numbered about two hundred. The discrepancy between the two estimates being partly due—so, at least, I imagine—to the fact that *An Phoblacht* counted in all the passers-by; and as College Green is a traffic centre of Dublin, passers-by are sufficiently numerous. There were plenty of people who, like myself, halted and pushed into the crowd to learn what the meeting was about, in the fashion of our crowds at Marble Arch. The Government organ, on the other hand, reckoned only the obvious supporters of the protest: the nucleus of enthusiasts who had come as an organized body. Personally I should have thought that *An Phoblacht's* five thousand, however interpreted, was a somewhat excessive estimate; but though there may have been uncertainty as regards the numbers present, there was no uncertainty about the tone of the speakers—they were one and all fiercely anti-British. Further, there was a juncture in the proceedings at which they were enlivened by a little procession of young women who appeared in Dame Street, marching towards us, carrying poles surmounted by notice-boards

—the Irish equivalent for our 'sandwiches.' The said boards were adorned, one and all, with vigorous inscriptions, whereof I remember only two; the one demanding instant release for certain political prisoners whom Free State Government had found it needful to lay by the heels; and the other consisting of the well-worn slogan 'England's Difficulty is Ireland's Opportunity.' As for the meeting itself, it was much like most other meetings of the 'Marble Arch' type; save for the sturdy supporters in the immediate neighbourhood of the car whence the speakers addressed us, its temper was distinctly placid; applause was confined to the minority but, on the other hand, no voice was ever raised in dissent. It may be that abuse of the British Government and nation is such an everyday matter in the Irish Free State that the ordinary citizen, on ordinary occasions, no longer gets excited about it.

As for the movers of the resolution, they spoke with the customary vehemence of the open-air extremist, and from more than one of them I got the impression that any stick was good enough to beat the English dog. One grievance ventilated I remember very clearly; it concerned the recent sale, in a London auction-room, of the former municipal insignia of the borough of Galway —which a past municipal authority had pledged for debt and subsequently failed to redeem. It was that ardent Republican, Mary McSwiney—sister of the hunger-striking Mayor of Cork—who denounced the sale as a proof of Irish subjection. 'I suppose,' she demanded indignantly, 'you've seen in the papers that there has been an auction in London where they sold the Galway mace and—and the other thing, I forget

what it's called. Would that have been possible if Ireland had been a free country?' . . . I don't suppose she actually meant that when Ireland had attained to the status of a free country, her municipalities will be at liberty to bilk their creditors—but that was what it sounded like. And to my English ear there was something distinctly humorous in acute regret for the loss of an artistic treasure which could only be described as 'the other thing'!

The denunciations of the evening were not confined to Great Britain and her Government; Mr. de Valera and some of his ministers also came in for a share, as backsliders in the matter of republican freedom and abettors of imperialistic tyranny. It is frequently the case that a government which has risen to power through revolt against a previous authority finds one of its most awkward difficulties in the fact that its own rebellious tactics are turned against it by its own dissatisfied extremists; whereupon it is driven to assert its authority by employing the very measures of coercion which its members, as rebels, had previously denounced as tyrannical. That unfortunate necessity has not been escaped by Fianna Fail, and, according to figures published by the Irish Republican Army, the number of Irish Republicans who were either undergoing sentence or awaiting trial, at the date of the meeting on College Green, was something between eighty and ninety; the charges against them varying from murder to refusal to answer questions and contempt of court. (Which, I conclude, means the frequent refusal of Republican prisoners to 'recognize' the courts by which they are tried; the theory being that the said courts are still the

instrument of British tyranny.[1]) The Government is said to make these political arrests unwillingly, and this I can well believe; but their unwillingness does not save them from the wrath of the Irish Republican Army stalwarts, and one of the College Green orators made scornful play with the former incitements to violence of Mr. Frank Aiken—once a revolutionary of thorough-going type, now one of de Valera's ministers. 'Soldiers,' of the republic were serving harsh sentences because they had continued the struggle against the British connection by methods which Mr. Frank Aiken himself had once enjoined on his countrymen.

Another grievance on which Miss McSwiney was more than emphatic was recruiting for the British army among citizens of the Irish Free State. By a provision of the treaty of 1921 the enlistment of Irishmen in the British services is agreed to, and though, in the Free State, there is no system of British recruiting, in the ordinary sense, the fact remains that a good many young men do find their way to England and present themselves at English depots for enlistment. A retired officer whom

[1] On June 4, 1935, a former chairman of the Dail, Mr. J. J. O'Kelly, and his two sons appeared in the Dublin Circuit court, as a sequel to their defence of Mr. O'Kelly's house when bailiffs and police were trying to enter it, to execute a decree for arrears of income-tax. Liability for the tax was denied and a spirited defence maintained; lumps of coal, brushes, and other projectiles being hurled from the house at the besiegers. At the outset of the proceedings in court one of the prisoners informed Judge Davitt: 'I have as much respect for this court or for the authority of King George as your father had for Queen Victoria.' This remark having been followed by others of a similar nature, the judge ordered the removal of the prisoners and the trial proceeded in their absence.

Rev. J. Hobson

AN OPEN-AIR MARKET, CORK

S Cummins

RIDING HOME FROM MARKET

I met in the course of my travels told me that in his own neighbourhood no less than forty young men had recently approached him, wanting to know how they could join the British army or navy. Nearly all of them, he said, the right type of lad, the type that makes a good soldier—farmers' sons mostly; as an Irishman, he regretted they should want to leave the country. While another acquaintance, hailing from another county, told me that when he was discussing with one of his employees the possibility of European war, he said something to the effect that he supposed none of you fellows would be fighting for the British again. The remark called forth not only contradiction but a surmise that there 'd have to be special trains put on, to take all them as would want to join up! That, no doubt, is a picturesque exaggeration; still, true it is that many young Irishmen require no persuasion in the matter of serving the King. (A fact that, like individual kindliness, has to be put against the hate-cult.)

Against such Irishmen Miss McSwiney was extremely bitter. She regarded them apparently as traitors to their country and their cause; men who disgraced themselves by wearing the uniform of Ireland's hereditary enemy—and so on and so on, a veritable stream of indignation! She even went so far as to urge that men who had so disgraced themselves—who had worn British uniform, taken British money—should not be allowed to return to the land they had betrayed. . . . I noticed, by the by, that in the next number of *An Phoblacht* an article that dealt with this subject of Irish soldiers in the British army had been heavily censored—there were

large white blanks in the columns. Apparently some of the editor's remarks had been too candidly abusive even for a Free State censorship.

I do not suggest for a moment that such abuse of the British race and Government as I heard at the above meeting—and which can be read any day in certain Irish publications—I do not suggest that it is any more venomous than abuse that can be heard in London from, say, a 'Left Wing' platform spouting fury against capitalism or a gathering convened to discuss and denounce the misdeeds of Shirts, Black or Brown. We have our hate-cults, making for intolerance and quarrel; but they do not seem to engross so much of our interest —do not occupy so large a space in our books, our classrooms, and our newspapers—as the Irish hate-cult against England.

VIII. THE STRONG HAND OF THE PAST

MORE than once it has been said to me by Irishmen that they felt more akin to continental races than to the English, their nearest neighbours, whose tongue they spoke. This, when one thinks of it, is comprehensible enough; the outlook of a people is conditioned by the racial experience which we call its history, and despite its geographical isolation, the racial experience of Ireland has in certain respects been far more continental in character than that of England, lying nearer to the European mainland.

The word 'continental' in this connection may be translated as 'troubled'; Ireland, from one generation to another, has known the invasions, the wars between factions, that have fallen, often enough, to the lot of mainland races but that we, in England, have (save by exception) been spared. No one, I think, can be much in the society of Frenchmen, Germans, Poles—any continental nationals—without realizing how much more consciously they are aware of their country's past than ourselves of the Anglo-Saxon breed. And the reason for this conscious awareness of the past is because its wars and tumults have left visible imprint on more than the pages of a history book; on habits and frontiers, on channels of commerce and customs of military service; and sometimes (as in districts of northern France) on the very face of the country. To England the war that the French Revolution set flaring for a quarter of a century was a matter of sea-fights off other peoples'

coasts, of extra taxation, rebellion in Ireland, Wellington's campaigns in Portugal, in Spain, and in France; never anything nearer invasion than the army that lay at Boulogne. No occupation by hostile armies, as Germany knew it in that quarter of a century; as Russia knew it, as Italy, as Spain, as Austria; as France also knew it in her turn. And the wars of the Revolution and era of Napoleon were only one phase in the long European experience of war; almost every continental country has again and again been fought over, harried, seen its land laid waste, its cities occupied by the foreigner, and bears visible scars of its sufferings in the shape of ruins. . . . And as with the continent of Europe, so with Ireland; it, too, has known warfare at its doors. The same causes that have fostered historical awareness in the Frenchman and the German have fostered it also in the Irishman.

In this matter of historical awareness, or memory, no two people, I imagine, can be further apart than the Irish and the English. (Be it noted, I write English, with no intention of including Scottish. Until times comparatively recent, Scotland was also a troublous country, where clash of arms was frequent, and for that reason the Scot is also aware of his past.) For if the Englishman is often handicapped politically by his inability to remember the sufferings and achievements of his fathers, the Irishman is handicapped by his inability to forget them. Handicapped, and perhaps more heavily; there is, I think, in a good many Irishmen, something like an obsession with the past, an obsession so strong that it prevents them from adapting themselves to the atmosphere of to-day. 'They talk,' I have heard it said

by an English visitor, 'as if Cromwell had just finished slaughtering in Drogheda and taken last night's boat to Holyhead.' And there is a story, on excellent authority, of a meeting between two eminent Irishmen, one as representative of the Free State, the other of the State of Northern Ireland. Their meeting was for the purpose of political business; but in order to arrive at an understanding, the representative of Saorstát Eireann thought it necessary to begin his argument with a statement of Irish conditions in the epoch of Richard Cœur de Lion and to trace developments through succeeding centuries in detail. At the end of an hour he had got so far that he was dealing with the misdeeds of the Virgin Queen and her deputies—and the Ulsterman, whose outlook was less antiquarian, decided he had had enough.

It is that nearness of 'yesterday's seven thousand years' which is a factor in the keeping alive of old grievance. Maybe our English habit of forgiving old grievances, because we have forgotten them, has nothing essentially meritorious about it; all the same it has its occasional convenience. But being, as it is, the result of our racial experience, we cannot expect to find it in the moral make-up of the Irishman. On the contrary, the more one reads and thinks of what has been in Ireland, the more does one accept the inevitability, in some respects at least, of the Irish outlook, the Irish temper, of to-day.

. . . . . .

It is not only as a sense of grievance that the past is near to the Irishman; one of the manifestations of the nationalist cult is the vision—the almost obsession—of a Golden Age Ireland. A legendary Ireland, a nation

united, where the chiefs stood beside the High King; a country as yet unconquered by the Norman, unharried by the Dane, a centre of learning and diffuser of light to a continent sunk in heathen darkness. An Ireland ruled in justice under Brehon law and unrivalled in practice of the arts. Ireland of the Tara Brooch and the Book of Kells; Ireland of saints and heroes. . . . To read descriptions of this Golden Age is to be reminded, now and then, of King Arthur and his Table Round; but whereas the glories of Arthur's England with us are frankly a legend, the perfections of Ireland's Golden Age are facts to be taught in the classroom. This Ireland before the coming of the alien is not only a country of missionaries and artists and good fighting men; it is the nearest thing to Utopia that has ever existed on earth! I quote again from the *Short Story of the Irish Race* intended for the use of the young; premising, however, that it is not only the young who accept the legend of Utopian virtue and well-being.

'The high morality and noble ideals of the ancient Irish people are shown throughout all the old chronicles and tales. Six maidenly gifts expected of an Irish girl were: beauty of person, beauty of voice, gift of music, knowledge of embroidery, knowledge of needlework. . . . Regarding the qualities expected of the men of Ireland, we recall Cuchulain's: "I care not whether I die to-morrow or next year if only my name and noble deeds live after me." And also Oisin's statement that the Fenians won all battles because they had strength in their arms, courage in their hearts, and truth upon their tongues.'

(Cuchulain and Oisin are, of course, to the full as

legendary as Arthur and his Knights or the Paladins who rode with Charlemagne.)

'In such high reverence,' the narrative goes on, 'was learning and the arts held in ancient Ireland, that scholars, poets, musicians, lawyers, and smiths ranked with chieftains. Because of the Irish people's love for beauty of mind and beauty of imagination, poets were especially esteemed. With the possible exception of Greece and Rome, there was no country in Europe in which poetry was so loved, so carefully cultivated, or so much of it of such high quality created as in ancient Ireland. . . . Medicine was an art that was carefully cultivated also. Schools of medicine existed in the earliest times; and in every part of Ireland there were certain families who, during centuries, devoted their sons to medicine and surgery.'

The historian then turns to the glories of ancient Irish art; the ornaments, sacred and profane, wrought in precious metals, which 'were rarely to be matched anywhere in the world for beauty and for fineness and delicacy of workmanship.' (Instancing, of course, that wonder of illumination, the Book of Kells, and the only lesser beauties of the Book of Durrow; and in the goldsmith's art, the Tara Brooch and Ardagh Chalice.) And, having dealt with the glories of Irish art, he goes on to deal with the system of Brehon law and to assure his young readers that 'the laws of the ancient Irish people are among the most beautiful, most just, and most democratic of any in the world.'

Such, according to our historian, was the civilization and high culture of the Irish people—law-abiding, learned, adept in the arts, bestowing their learning and their

Christianity on the yet uncivilized races of the European continent—until 'the golden radiance of that Golden Age was dimmed by the coming of the savage Northmen.' That was the beginning of Ireland's tragedy; the invasions by men of less enlightened breeds which made an end of the Utopian conditions created in an Ireland free from alien interference. The 'savage Northmen' from Sweden and the fjords not only raided the shores of Erin; they stayed there and made permanent settlements. They were, as a matter of fact, the first people to found an Irish town; so long as the Gaels held undivided rule in Ireland, there was no such form of group life as the town or city. Previous to the coming of the Danish settlers, the nearest approach to urban life was in the ecclesiastical communities; it was the Northmen, not the native Irish, who laid the foundations of Dublin, when they settled round a fort they had raised for the purpose of commanding the Liffey at the Hurdle Ford.[1] Dublin and Cork and Wexford and Waterford and Limerick—one and all came into being under Danish rule. And with their foundations were laid those of Irish commerce; the harbours of the Northmen were ports as well as fortresses. For two hundred years the Dane from his settlements disputed the mastery of Ireland with the Gael; even after the decisive battle of Clontarf (in 1014), when the Dane went down before the high king, Brian, the alien settlers were not driven out of the country. Wexford and Waterford and Dublin were still Danish cities at the coming of the Anglo-Normans.

[1] Which in Gaelic is Ath Cliath; hence the modern postmark on Dublin letters, Baile (which is anglicized as Bally) Atha Cliath, the Town of the Hurdle Ford.

For us who are English (less so with the Scot) this Irish cult of an age long past is something outside our ken. We have heard, no doubt, of Alfred as a sovereign held in honour, perhaps the most wisely heroic among English kings; but, unless we are students of the Anglo-Saxon period, we cannot imagine ourselves pondering with enthusiasm the statesmanship of Alfred's rule or the glories of his Saxon England. If every schoolchild in Ireland is not proud of ancient Irish supremacy in illuminated manuscript, it is not the fault of his teaching and tradition; but I suppose that comparatively few of us indifferent English—whether we be children or whether we be grown—are even aware that our Saxon fathers also had their masters in the art. True, there is one Book of Kells, and one only, but Anglo-Saxon illumination is worthy of compare with all else. The Ireland that, after the break-up of the Roman Empire, sent her missionaries wide into barbarian Europe—that Ireland is still a reality, a near reality, to a goodly proportion of the citizens of Saorstát Eireann; whereas what does it matter to their neighbours in England that Saxons also went out to preach Christ and that Boniface, apostle of heathen Germany, was by birth a Winfried, born in Wessex? Winfried, born in Wessex, is as dead to the modern Englishman as though he had never been alive; but the Irish missionaries who preached Christ to the heathen are by no means forgotten by their countrymen; they are remembered with honour and with pride.

The Celt, it is said, is gifted with a long racial memory; but, apart from any special Celtic characteristics, there are reasons, and obvious reasons, for the prevalence of

this Golden Age cult. It is a form of self-encouragement, needed self-encouragement; a people conscious of subjection in the past and struggling towards the unity of nationhood (and finding its goal not so easy of attainment as once it thought) reminds itself that Ireland, till the coming of the foreign invader, was a nation of saints and of artists as well as of lawgivers and warriors. Reminds itself—or perhaps one should rather say persuades itself! For when it comes to sober history Gaelic nationality is somewhat ill-defined, and the colours of the Gaelic picture have their blurs—their black smudges and likewise their red. It is somewhat rash to conclude that the social system that produced a Tara Brooch was necessarily peaceful, united, and civilized; a mere glance at the memoirs of Benvenuto Cellini will supply proof that excellence in the goldsmith's art is not incompatible with lawlessness. While a high authority on Celtic archaeology—Professor Macalister of University College, Dublin—has recently made a merciless attack on the cult of the Golden Age, its illusions and idols. 'If,' he writes, in his archaeological study, *Ancient Ireland*, 'we could look away from the wonderful works of art over which we have been meditating, and could call up a realistic dream-picture of the world in which they came into being, we should very soon be glad to avert our eyes. We should see all the pathological consequences of dirt—scrofula, plague, leprosy, typhus, and whatever disease it was that produced the hideous condition (frequently accompanied by blindness) described as *clār-enech*, "board-faced." We have only to read the literature in the original tongue, free from the well-meaning expurgations of translators, to realize that,

though Ireland was not necessarily any worse off than the rest of Europe in these respects, she was certainly no better. We should see a land populated beyond its economic resources, with the usual consequences, crowds of predatory vagrants, living like foxes on whatever crumbs they could pick up, and incidentally carrying and spreading these disease germs; frightful famines, far worse than that of 1847, for . . . in one of these visitations the inhabitants were actually reduced to cannibalism; and an oppression of the poor by the great such as none in modern times has ever experienced. If we may believe the preface to the hymn *Sēn Dē*, in the old Irish *Liber Hymnorum*, the country was so uncomfortably full of people in the middle of the seventh century that the nobles, with the approval of St. Feichin of Fore and other ecclesiastics, petitioned the Almighty, with fasting, to weed them out!' While in another passage Professor Macalister remarks dryly that 'Ancient Ireland is one of the most interesting fields for study in the world. There, better perhaps than anywhere else, lies, revealed and unadorned, the primitive background of European civilization. But it must have been an unchancy place to live in.'

This, of course, is stressing the reverse of the ancient Irish medal. Professor Macalister, as many pages in his book make clear, has small sympathy with those who seek to revive a mentality and outlook that died with its own dead epoch. All that he says is doubtless true, but I suppose that he himself would admit that life in Gaelic Erin was often more tolerable than his grim description suggests; that famines were not of everyday occurrence, and that many of the pathological consequences

of dirt, being accepted as inevitable, were less horrifying than they would be to the present generation. His object, however, is to combat what he calls 'the fatal error' of supposing that skill in certain arts implies 'an equally advanced stage of material civilization.'

As for law and social system in the Golden Age, Professor MacNeill (quoted by Stephen Gwynn in his *Student's History of Ireland*) thus describes the life of the little Irish tribe, or 'state':

'An Irish *tuath*, or petty state, possessing a complete though simple form of government, with a popular assembly, a senate, and a king, with its distinct citizenship and its separate jurisdiction, had the average extent of a square of twenty miles, with a population probably of fifteen or twenty thousand. It was altogether a rural state, an "urbs in rure." The civilization of early Christian Ireland was the aggregate of the life lived by the small rural communities and by the still smaller monastic communities which they contained. . . . The king of each one of these little states sat once a week in his house to give judgment in litigation. The matters about which he was expected to judge with knowledge were chiefly the valuation and measurement of land, the law of the division of land among heirs, of boundaries and fences, of guarantees against trespass and damage in husbandry, of rights to forest trees and common pasturage.'

. . . . . .

Ireland was never a Roman province: to her loss, it may be guessed, since Rome's gift to the world was that

sense of law and order for which Erin has never been conspicuous. Because she was outside the Roman border, when the Empire fell she was unshaken by its fall. On the contrary, Europe's loss was intellectually her gain; as the Hun and the Vandal swept across the Continent, many scholars fled before them and sought refuge on her shores—thus helping to foster the passion for learning which, for three centuries, brought throngs of foreign students to her monastic schools and caused her to be known as the university of Europe. That monastic Ireland, scholarly and civilized, sending out her missionaries and teachers to the Continent, is the Ireland of the Gaelic enthusiast and his school-books; but high as were its merits, the fact remains that it was an ecclesiastical civilization apart; if record speaks true, it had curiously little influence upon the life of the warring Irish tribes. If the school-book passage I have quoted be correct as to fact, and the laws of ancient Ireland be indeed 'among the most beautiful, most just, and most democratic of any in the world,' then the inference would seem to be that they were not generally observed. In the Ireland that produced the university of Europe there were kings many and chiefs many, but there was no common authority to maintain either law or order. 'Take the fate of the kings of the sixth century, the golden age of Irish learning. There were twelve of them and no less than ten fell in battle or were murdered. Nor is the sixth century, in this respect, in any wise unique. For, from 1274 to 1374 there were no less than fourteen kings of Connaught and only one died a natural death.' [1] While it was not only the

[1] Murray and Law, *Ireland* (The Nations of To-day Series).

'savage Northmen' who were addicted to the plunder of monasteries; the Gaels also took a hand.

A Nation Once Again runs the Irish patriotic song; but how little the Irish people were united in the days of their legendary nationhood is made manifest again and again in their story. It was no united Irish nation that overthrew the Danes at Clontarf; the army of the high king, Brian (who fell in the battle), routed not only the Norsemen but their allies, the men of Leinster. Further, when Brian's victorious army set out, carrying their wounded, to return to their native Munster, they were attacked on the march by the men of Ossory—who, presumably, had never even thought of setting the advantage of Ireland, as a whole, above that of their own tribe or clan. Nor is there anything particularly surprising in that; in the eleventh century nationality, as we understand it, was everywhere a conception of the future; but whereas in England the feudal system, culminating in duty and service to the king, steadily prepared the ground for nationality, in Ireland there was no certain overlord to enforce the king's peace and king's law. . . . Legend has woven a significance of treachery to Ireland round the action of Dermot MacMorrough, King of Leinster, when, driven from his kingdom by Tiernan O'Rourke, he called Henry, King of England, to his aid. That, however, was the usual procedure in tribal-feudal days; a defeated ruler, ousted from his territories, would apply, as a matter of course, to some neighbouring prince for money and soldiers to carry on the contest. If Dermot MacMorrough had taken the loss of his kingdom lying down, the chances are that some other Irish chieftain,

sooner or later, would have called in the Anglo-Normans as allies. And, like Dermot, would have promised to pay for help rendered by some form of territorial concession.

. . . . . .

It may be that one reason for the nearness of the Irishman to his country's past is the fact that his pageant of history concerns, with few exceptions, his own small corner of the world. Ireland itself has been the scene of its own tragedies. When Browning sang: 'Here and here did England help me,' England was a thousand miles and more away; and the stirring events of our English history, the dramatic events that stick in the memory, have as often as not been enacted in other lands—other continents—or on seas where can stand no memorial. We helped to decide the future of Europe at Waterloo, which lies in Belgium, and on the Somme, which lies in France; but Ireland, when it came to the arbitrament of arms, saw her fate decided at the Boyne. A British garrison stood a gallant siege in Lucknow—which you must travel into Asia to visit; but the walls of Derry which defied King James, the city of Limerick which defied King William, are close for any Irishman to see. Where and when was there a massacre on English ground? But the Irish Catholic can point to Drogheda and the Irish Protestant to Scullabogue—where the Wexford rebels of Ninety-Eight burned their prisoners alive in a barn.

Be that as it may, the fact remains that the Irishman is consciously influenced by his past, in a way we English find hard to understand. Influenced by history and

influenced by legend, in his politics as well as his ideals. It is, for instance, the tradition of a saintly and heroic Ireland of ancient days (which Professor Macalister scans with incredulity) that has had not a little to do with the educational policy of the present Irish Government; the determined effort to revive the Gaelic language, as a means of restoring the Gaelic mentality and outlook! And it is, if I mistake not, a belief in an Ireland united in the past that adds vehemence to the demand for the enclosure of Ulster in a national Irish Republic.[1]

[1] See Note. *The Four Masters.*

IX. COMPULSORY IRISH

A PEOPLE which has achieved revolution with the aid of violence, which has discarded its accustomed laws and methods of administration and begun its collective life under new conditions, has usually some hard years ahead; a good many monarchs have owed their restoration to the fact that new systems of government do not run smoothly from the outset. The Irish Free State, in this respect, has been no exception to the general revolutionary rule; starting life with a downright civil war, it is still troubled at intervals by sporadic outbursts of violence and political crime. It is in a political atmosphere that is often uneasy that the rulers of the Free State, with astonishing courage, have started various drastic experiments — in manufacture, in methods of farming, in the trade relations of the country with the outside world. And as if the task of consolidating a new state and reconciling the factions of a quarrelsome people were not sufficiently heavy, they are doing their best to bring about a revolution in language. Those who hold authority in Saorstát Eireann, and order the teaching to be given in its schools, have decreed that the nation, so soon as may be, shall conduct its daily conversation and business in the Gaelic tongue; in a tongue, that is to say, which to the large majority of Irishmen to-day is—save for a few place-names, words, and phrases—as foreign as French or German.

In a pamphlet, *Official Notes for Teachers on the Teaching*

of Irish in the national schools, are the following instructions and remarks:

'The teaching of Irish in the schools is a part, a very important part, of the general effort to restore the Irish language to its rightful place *as the everyday speech of the nation.*[1] Its aim is frankly and unequivocally to make Irish-speakers of the children of the Gaeltacht[2] so that, by the age of fourteen, they may be able to express themselves fully and correctly in the new language. In the Gaeltacht its aim is to perfect the vernacular into as adequate an instrument for all forms of self-expression as the higher English course aims at doing for English-speaking children. But this effort is itself only part of a wider aim which is to ensure or preserve the cultural continuity of the nation by putting its youth into possession of the language, literature, history, and tradition of the historic Irish people, thus fixing its outlook in the Gaelic mould. With this wider purpose all the school work is associated, especially history, local and general, geography and topography, singing, and the reading-matter in English. . . .'

There follow instructions, of practical use to the teacher, and then, at the end of the pamphlet, some more 'general considerations' on the Gaelic language and 'the establishment of the Gaelic outlook in the minds of the pupils.'

'In 1922 it was set out that an essential part of the educational aim of the programme was "the strengthening of the national fibre by giving the language, history,

[1] Italics mine.—C. H.

[2] The parts of the country in which Irish is not the universal language of everyday life at present, as distinct from the Irish-speaking Gaeltacht.

music, and tradition of Ireland their natural place in the life of the Irish schools." That aim has not changed. The teaching of the Irish language itself is therefore not an end in itself. The aim is broader and more difficult. It is to restore, as far as is practicable, the characteristically Gaelic turn of mind and way of looking at life. That Gaelic attitude, of course, gives us our individuality as a nation, without it we become an amorphous or a hybrid people, and in these modern days of foreign penetration by newspaper, book, and cinema, the need for a vivid conception of our duty in this regard is more urgent than ever. If, then, we ask where is this traditional Gaelic mentality best exhibited, the answer is immediate—in the prayers and salutations, the music and poetry, the legends and folk-lore, the proverbs and ranna which through centuries have become woven into the very texture of the Gaelic mind. . . . Prayers and ordinary salutations and expressions breathing a high spirituality, a vivid awareness of the presence of God, and a deep spirit of resignation to His will are dominant elements in the Gaelic outlook on life. . . .'

Such are the aims of the language-revolutionists, briefly and officially set forth; the Gaelic outlook by way of the Gaelic tongue. But even those who are most desirous of restoring Irish to the dignity of a national language admit that there are difficulties in the way of restoration; Irish, for many generations, has not been a literary tongue, and when (thanks to the Gaelic League) interest was revived in it, one of the drawbacks to its study was the fact that only among the western peasantry was it still a living speech. That meant lack of any recognized standard of spelling and pronunciation,

and local dialects showing considerable variation.[1] Then, because it has been, until recently, a speech entirely rustic, it does not easily adapt itself, like more widely used tongues, to the needs and manners of a changing and mechanized world; its ordinary vocabulary was limited to the thoughts, experiences, and wants of those who dwell in villages, and, from the very beginning, it has had to be expanded by the adoption of numerous foreign words and phrases. Gaelic unadulterated is a language more adapted to poets than to plumbers and electric fitters.

It is only recently, as history goes, that the decay of the Irish language has been rapid; less than a hundred years ago it was still widely spoken by the rural population and until the beginning of the nineteenth century there had existed and flourished a 'natural' Irish literature—a literature, that is to say, which, in contrast to Gaelic authorship of the present day, stood in no need of artificial encouragement. By the beginning of the century, however, its use was on the decline; while the stream of emigration that, from the fifties on, flowed to the United States, came most copiously from the western Irish-speaking districts. Public education, whether in the classroom or whether on the microphone, is the natural enemy of diversity of tongues, and the

[1] An Irish friend of mine who, at one time, attended a Gaelic League class, told me that she soon gave it up because of the differences of opinion between various Gaelic scholars with regard to pronunciation, differences which constantly held up the work of the class. That was before the days of compulsory Irish. With the teaching of the language in schools and its use by the writers who are endeavouring to re-create a literature in Irish, some measure of standardization has no doubt been attained.

establishment of a system of national schools, where the teaching was in English, no doubt hastened the process of substitution. Thanks to these and other causes, in the thirty years between 1860 and 1890 the number of Irish speakers in the country was reduced by more than a half. It was the prospect of the complete extinction of spoken Irish that called into being various associations which had for their object the saving it alive; of these associations the most important was the Gaelic League, whose founder and presiding genius was Dr. Douglas Hyde. The beginnings of the league were made in the year 1893, made modestly at a meeting of only nine persons; the declared object of these nine and their associates being 'to keep the Irish language spoken in Ireland.' The league, in its first years, had a hard struggle for existence, but its supporters refused to be daunted and in the end roused more than antiquarian interest—widespread popular enthusiasm. There were advocates of the Gaelic revival—extreme advocates—who held that the life of a people was bound up with the life of its language, and that the loss of Ireland's separate speech meant loss of her national identity. From its small beginnings in 1893 the Gaelic League, before many years were past, had become something more than a league: a movement, a cause. 'Hyde went to America to raise funds for the league, and when he returned bringing back ten thousand pounds, the streets of Dublin were crowded to receive him as they would not have been for Redmond at that date.' [1] The revival was not only a matter of the teaching of Irish in schools and voluntary classes; festivals—Feisanna—were encouraged in

[1] Stephen Gwynn's *Ireland* (Modern World Series).

Irish-speaking districts, festivals where Irish ballads and story-telling were mingled with dancing and music. In its first stages the Gaelic movement had no political aim—it was purely a matter of preserving ancient language and customs; but as the national spirit flared into revolt it was almost inevitable that the idea of an Irish language, a separate Irish language, should cease to have a purely cultural significance. It would be yet another barrier between Ireland and her neighbour, yet another sign of independence.

Even with the aid of patriotic enthusiasm, a change-over of daily speech *en masse* could never be an easy process; and in the case of Irish there are special difficulties that might not apply to other languages. One of these I have already indicated: that, in so far as it is a living speech, Gaelic lacks uniformity. That, it may be, is not a serious matter; uniformity, in the end, may be enforced through the schools; a far more awkward obstacle to progress is the fact that Irish, for the most part, is taught in the schools by those who have learned it as a foreign language and who speak it as the foreigner speaks it. Irish is learned, in the majority of cases, in the same way as Latin is learned, from those who have acquired it by application, not from those who have thought in it from childhood.

. . . . . .

By 1908, when the National University came into being—with component colleges in Dublin, Cork, and Galway—a system of voluntary education in the Irish language was already in existence; the first training school for teachers of Irish had been founded in 1905

and within the next ten years a dozen more such schools were opened. It was in 1910 that the language question became openly and actively political when, after much agitation, pro and con, it was enacted that, after the year 1913, the Gaelic tongue should be a compulsory subject for entrance to the National University. Even among members of the Gaelic League there was often strong opposition to this demand for 'essential Irish.' One of the arguments against it was that Gaelic had never been the tongue of the Anglo-Irish Protestant community and was not taught in their Protestant schools; hence its adoption as a compulsory subject in the National University—which in contradistinction to Trinity was predominantly Catholic—would set up another barrier between students of the two religions and races, since it would automatically exclude from the newer foundation large numbers of the Anglo-Irish element. But, spite of opposition, patriotic sentiment prevailed; and proof of public interest in the question is the fact that 'essential Irish' was practically imposed on the doubtful senate of the university by the action of Irish county councils—which threatened to withdraw their rate-provided scholarships if the language were not made compulsory.

I have been unable to obtain any recent estimate of the number of Free State citizens who speak Gaelic as their native language. The only official figures I came across related to the year 1911. As, however, they were published in a directory for the year 1932, it is possible that no later figures have, as yet, been compiled; and, even if somewhat out of date, they give an idea of the magnitude of the task of language-conversion

undertaken by the Ireland of to-day. This official list for 1911 gave details of Gaelic-speaking in all the different counties; including the Six which are now grouped apart as the State of Northern Ireland — and where Irish speakers, as a matter of course, are not so numerous as elsewhere. I copied into my note-book particulars concerning several of the counties now embodied in the Irish Free State — and therefore, presumably, in process of conversion to the national language of Ireland—selecting them as representative of the different districts of the country, north, south, east, and west. In the list the Irish-speaking inhabitants of each county were classified under two headings: those who speak Irish only, and those who speak both languages; with an added note, giving the percentage of Irish-speakers to the total population of the county. In County Dublin, as might be expected, the speakers of Irish only were non-existent in 1911; of those who spoke Irish as well as English the number given is 5,873; the percentage of Irish-speakers to the total population of the county being 3·4. This, it is pointed out, represents a marked increase in the course of the last ten years; at a previous census, in 1901, the percentage had only been 2·2. It may be taken for granted that this increase was due to the activities of the Gaelic League.

The real Irish-speaking district, the Gaeltacht, lies in the west; it is in Galway and Mayo, in Kerry and Donegal, that you may find yourself travelling in the local motor bus in company with Irishmen who learned the national language in their homes, as well as in their schools. In County Mayo, in the year 1911, the Irish-speaking table was as follows:

Irish only	1,518
English and Irish . . .	87,083
Percentage to total population .	46·1

In Mayo it is likely enough that a considerable percentage of the bilingual use their Irish naturally and by preference, but in Dublin and other more easterly counties the reverse will certainly be the case. The natural tongue of the bilingual will be English and they will speak Irish only as an educated Englishman speaks French.

As Westmeath is a county in central Ireland, I added that to my list. Here, also, there was never an 'Irish only,' but the bilingual numbered just over two thousand—percentage to total population being 3·5. County Donegal, in the extreme north-west, is another stronghold of the national language:

Irish only	4,733
English and Irish . . .	54,580
Percentage to total population .	35·2

It is unnecessary to quote further figures in order to indicate the distribution through the country of the 'natural' Irish language—noting only and finally that, in this year 1911, the total number of 'Irish onlies' was no more than sixteen thousand. And, carefully as the language is fostered nowadays, it is hardly probable that there has been an increase, since 1911, in the number of those whose only medium is Irish. Mr. Stephen Gwynn, writing in 1924, points out that 'despite all the support given to the Gaelic League, the number of Irish-speakers fell from 690,000 in 1891 to 580,000

in 1911. . . . A new census would undoubtedly show a great increase in the number able to claim knowledge; but few who know Ireland would dispute that those who use it for ordinary purposes, because it comes easier to them than English, is even now on the decline.'

That was written in 1924; since which date official encouragement of the national language has become even more intense. Over the community of natural Gaelic-speakers—the Gaeltacht—the upholders of the national-language idea watch with an obvious anxiety. For in the Gaeltacht, and the Gaeltacht only, is that leaven of Irish, daily and unschooled, which in time, it is hoped, will leaven the whole national lump; it is in the company of peasant farmers and fishers of the Gaeltacht that earnest students of the national tongue put life into their class-taught acquirements; while, for the same purpose, children are sent, for a month at a time, to stay in Gaelic-speaking households.

Recently an experiment in Gaelic migration has been made; an Irish-speaking colony has been brought from Mayo or Connemara and settled some fifty miles from Dublin—at Athboy in County Meath. The object of the move was not primarily to provide the eastern counties with linguistic facilities hitherto available only in the counties of the west; the migrants came from a distressed area—it was because their own land of Connaught was too poor to support them that they were given other holdings in the richer soil of Meath. Evidently it is feared that in their new surroundings the community may acquire the speech of their neighbours; and more than once I have seen in Irish publications warnings against intrusion on the life of the colony,

and insistence on the high importance of preserving its Gaelic undefiled.

The work of the schools for Gaelic education is often supplemented by the Press; though no one, I think, has yet ventured to produce a newspaper in Irish for general reading, there are newspapers intended for general reading—among them the *Irish Press* and *Irish Independent*—which run to a column or two in the national language. These columns, as a rule, are not aggressively prominent, nor do they furnish much news, the contents (so far as I could make out from those I studied) being chiefly educational — either directly so, or in the shape of snippets of fairly easy reading. (Here, of course, I speak under correction, my knowledge of the language being nil.) The *Irish Press* runs a feature entitled 'A Phrase a Day' for its readers to commit to memory. The phrases are such as might be used in common talk—for instance: 'It 's extremely nice of you.' The translation is always given in Irish lettering but accompanied by a guide to pronunciation in Latin script.[1] The *Irish Independent* recently offered for competition among its young readers a hundred scholarships, in the shape of a month in the Gaeltacht, and then proceeded to serialize the necessary lessons. The only drawback to this Gaeltacht method of disseminating the language would seem to be that, with such constant visits of scholars to their families, the youngsters of the Gaeltacht, as time goes on, will return the compliment and begin to pick up English.

The long-continued flow of emigration across the Atlantic was one of the causes of decline in the speaking

[1] See Note. *Authorship in Irish.*

of Irish; so long as the United States was the goal of young Irishmen, English was an economic need. And though the Irish stream from Queenstown to New York is a rivulet compared to what it was, there are Irish colonies in Liverpool and Glasgow, and the harvesters who yearly cross to England and Scotland—all these find Gaelic of little use when it comes to the business of bread-winning. The ardent propagandist for the national Irish tongue is one who, like Mr. de Valera, looks forward to an Ireland with no need to emigrate her sons, capable of affording sustenance to a growing population. An Ireland where, in a phrase already quoted, 'No longer shall our children be brought up like our cattle for export!' Ireland wholly independent, Ireland self-sufficing—the language-cult owes much of its energy to that hope and ambition. And something of that energy (it is greatly to be feared) to an anti-British stimulus; the desire, in daily speech as in all things else, to have done with the traditional enemy.

To Gaelic, as a natural, everyday speech, there would be one serious drawback from the point of view of the Nationalist whose aim and hope is an Ireland undivided: the Six Counties restored to the Twenty-Six. Diversity of tongues would be yet another barrier between the Free State and the State of Northern Ireland which it so earnestly desires to absorb. Dublin may consent to be tutored by the Gaeltacht but it will be a long time, a very long time, before Belfast follows her example. And even if Belfast were to try, the result would probably be failure; for the Ulster Irishman, who is mostly a Lowland Scot by descent, has no historic urge towards proficiency in Gaelic—which is

the tongue of a people that his fathers dispossessed and succeeded.

And another stumbling-block, this time in the path of the scholar. As already pointed out, Irish for some generations has been almost entirely a spoken language —the spoken language of peasants. That being the case, it is as certain as anything can be that for many years to come the student of science—of law, of history, economics, philosophy—will have at his disposal no really adequate library in the Irish language. Whatever the merits of Gaelic, this disadvantage cannot be denied; it will take many years, and the services of countless translators—not to mention countless additions to the present Gaelic vocabulary—before the undergraduate of Saorstát Eireann can dispense with his 'essential English.'

But, after all, the most serious objection to the Gaelic cult is the fact that it is already handicapping Young Ireland in the matter of education. I was told by the head of a well-known college for girls that, at the expiry of a stated number of years, proficiency in the Irish language would be demanded from all teachers in Irish schools—however high their other qualifications. That would mean, she explained, that in a few years' time there would be an embargo on teachers from England or Scotland—experts in special branches of knowledge—who at present came in freely, to the great advantage of the Irish educational system. It is obvious that restrictions of this sort must bring about a lowering of the educational standard; and in this connection I cannot do better than quote the recent protest [1] of an

[1] Published in the *Irish Times* of November 23, 1935.

Irishman who has every right to be heard—Mr. John J. Horgan, a citizen of Cork, whose name is known throughout Ireland, and who, far from desiring neglect of Irish, is himself a student of the language. Mr. Horgan is even in favour of the teaching of Irish in the schools, as a compulsory subject; what he denounces, and denounces with vigour, is 'the attempt to teach in Irish to English-speaking children subjects other than Irish.' This method of instruction, he declares, is being forced upon the secondary schools by a system of 'baiting the hook with "grants" and by pressure from school inspectors.' He goes on to assert that the policy has never been discussed in the Dail or Senate and therefore has no real sanction in law; it was initiated entirely by departmental action in the days of the Cosgrave Government. 'It has been continued by the present Minister for Education although it is notorious that a great many of the teachers and inspectors are against it. Such educational methods are bound to be fatal, not only to the general level of education in the country, already low enough, but to the hope of reviving, or even preserving, the Irish language itself. They are conceived in perversity, being based on the obvious fallacy that Irish is now the spoken language of the country, and, what is much worse, they are false to every known principle of education.

'It is self-evident that it is impossible to acquire a knowledge of what you do not know through a language you do not know. No language ever was or ever will be revived by such crass and cruel methods. If persisted in, they can only make confusion worse confounded and produce a virtually uneducated nation. I wonder what

would be said if it was suggested that English-speaking children in Ireland should be taught Euclid through French. Yet in essentials what is now being attempted is in no way different. Surveying the present situation in Irish education a cynic might well say that the Irish language has ceased to be a language and become an economic but very profitable industry.' Mr. Horgan adds that it is hopeless to expect any change through political action 'because the politicians are afraid of the vested interests concerned.'

Here, no doubt, he has put his finger on a real difficulty. We are all too apt to forget that education has its business side, that teaching is a trade as well as a vocation. In the Irish Free State, for several years past, the educational tradesman, with his living to earn, has been encouraged to stock Gaelic goods; hence it follows that a change of policy, in respect of Gaelic-teaching, would leave them useless on his hands. If, as Mr. Horgan avers, there are, in the Free State, many teachers and inspectors who strongly object to the 'crass and cruel methods' of the present system, there are doubtless many others who would greatly prefer to keep it going—some from an ardent sense of nationalism, some from more prosaic motives of self-interest. The same difficulty is touched on in an editorial in the *Irish Times*—commenting on Mr. Horgan's letter and appearing a day or two after it. Its writer, like Mr. Horgan, considers it disastrous that the children of the Free State 'are being taught through what is virtually a foreign language, by men and women whose knowledge of that language is often very deficient'; and, like him again, sees little hope of reversing the system of

'universal' Irish by the agency of the politician. 'Even if vested interests were not concerned,' there is 'the confusion of the language question with the political question. . . . The Irish language policy of the Government is bound up with the Gaelic movement as a whole, and that, in its turn, is entangled with politics. To deal with the language question on its own merits has become almost impossible. Opposition, whether on particular points or in general, is construed as "anti-national." Is it not a fact, the critics will be asked, that Irish is the original language of the country, and that English is an interloper?' . . . Here, it is obvious, comes in the anti-English motive, the desire to break every possible link between Ireland of to-day and Ireland once linked with Great Britain.

Again like Mr. Horgan, the writer in the *Irish Times* is no opponent of the Gaelic revival. 'To restore the language—and with it an appreciation of the old Gaelic literature and culture—was a natural aim of the newly established Free State. The objection is only to the manner whereby it is sought to effect the restoration. The Irish language had expired in all but a few districts. Would it not have been better to concentrate on those districts, fostering the language there and protecting it from further decay, so that in time there would be a strong Irish-speaking nucleus in Ireland? If the language had any vitality, and if it received judicious encouragement, it might then have begun to spread over the country—it would be bounded only by its own natural limits. Instead of that policy, however, the Government attempted to impose Irish on the whole of the Free State, and at once. It did not pause to consider

Rev. J. Hobson

'WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING'

The lady in the right-hand picture is wearing the cloak peculiar to West Cork peasants and fisherwomen. It is seen mainly in Bandon, Macroom, and Kinsale

whether the country was ready for the language; it insisted that, ready or not, it must be made to speak it. Grown men and women, who had never known a word of Irish, found that they must learn it in order to secure posts in the civil service; official publications were issued bilingually on the romantic assumption that some of the reading public might not be English-speakers, and, finally, universal Irish began to be forced on the schools. The result has been that education has suffered; that all the younger men and women now have a nominal knowledge of Irish; and that, as a living language, Irish is losing ground even in the Gaeltacht.'

As to whether that last assertion is correct I can, of course, express no opinion. But this, at least, I can assert: that, in spite of several years of education in the Gaelic tongue and official encouragement to make use of the same, the common speech of the young people you hear talking in shops, in trams, in the street, is the 'interloping' language of the Saxon. Once, it is true, at an open-air meeting held in Dublin, I heard a crowd addressed in the Irish tongue, but only for a few brief moments. The speaker began his oration by rolling out two or three sentences in a resonant Gaelic—I conclude, in order to show us what he could do and to set a good example to his auditors. Having, as it were, proclaimed his patriotism, he lapsed into English; and from the facial expression of those who stood around me, I suspected that if he had continued in Irish much of his pungent political abuse would have fallen on uncomprehending ears.

In this Irish attempt to accustom the vast majority of a people to the use of an unfamiliar language and train it *en masse* to a Gaelic way of thought is seen yet another instance of the modern conception of public education and the power which a system of public education puts into the hands of a government. The old idea that education was primarily for the benefit of the scholar —to assist his mental growth and give him power over himself and entry to the world of knowledge—that outworn idea has now been superseded by a conception of the school as an institution which moulds and polishes the species of crowd-mind which the government providing the schools and teachers happens to consider desirable. The regulation, in the interests of authority, of the human mind and character: that is the modern, the ever-spreading view of education. To Hitler's Germany the school is a factory for mass-production of the National-Socialist mentality; in Soviet Russia it is a factory for mass-production of the Communist mentality. While in Ireland, unfortunately, the school is going the same way—being transformed into a factory for the mass-production of Gaelic speech and citizens of Gaelic outlook. . . . The mould of desirable citizen differs under different governments; but the education-factory, in every case, is run on the same principle.

X. *'AGIN THE GOVERNMENT'*

IN a guide-book to Ireland which, taken all round (perhaps because intended for the use of British tourists), is temperate as regards its historical allusions, I came on one statement that struck me as curiously significant; contained in a paragraph enumerating the monuments of a county town in the west; one of the said monuments having been erected in honour of the Manchester Martyrs, 'executed in 1867 for the violent rescue of a Fenian prisoner in Manchester.' . . . There are monuments in a good many Irish towns to Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien, the Manchester Martyrs; and there is a song about them, a patriotic song, to the tune of *Tramp, tramp, tramp, the Boys are Marching!*

> God save Ireland, said the heroes—
> God save Ireland, said they all.
> Whether on the scaffold high
> Or the battle-field we die—
> What matter since for Ireland dear we fall!

I have no intention of discussing here the wisdom or unwisdom, the justice or otherwise of the death sentence passed on Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien in the year 1867; I have no intention of calling in question their patriotism or their courage. My point is merely the expression 'violent rescue'; which, to any one who had never heard of the Manchester Martyrs, would, I think, imply black eyes and bloody noses rather than a dead

policeman. Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien were among the Fenians who rescued a fellow-Fenian from the police-van in which he was being taken to trial at Manchester; the rescuers had fire-arms which they used in the course of the attack—a police-sergeant was shot and killed. Though the prisoner escaped, some of his rescuers were captured; amongst them the three Martyrs, who were tried, sentenced, and hanged on the ground that they had killed a man.

There are more reasons than one why an Irishman cannot be expected to look on the killing of a policeman in the same serious light as the Englishman; reasons why, to him, it may be merely an incident of 'violent rescue.' Proverbially he is 'agin the government,' but that is not necessarily a matter of temperament only; it has to be remembered that, even when just, his laws have often been imposed upon him from without. Even when just; and some have been monstrously unjust. In the latter category stands the Penal Code under which the Catholics of Ireland suffered for the better part of a century. Burke—himself a Protestant—declared that it was 'a machine . . . as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of the people—and the debasement of them in human nature itself—as ever proceeded from perverted ingenuity.' The declared object of its laws being 'to reduce the Catholics of Ireland to a miserable populace, without property, without estimation, without education. . . . They divided the nation into two distinct bodies, without common interest, sympathy, or connection. One of these bodies was to possess all the franchise, all the property, all the education: the other was to be

composed of drawers of water and cutters of turf for them.' [1]

This was not a flight of the oratory we nowadays call propaganda; the definite object of the Penal Laws was to deprive Irish Catholics alike of the direct power of the franchise and the influence exerted by those who hold a property stake in the country. All public offices were closed to the Catholic and so was the profession of law and the army; landed property being the chief source of wealth and influence, so far as possible he was barred from its possession. He was forbidden to take land on a longer lease than thirty-one years; nor could he acquire it from a Protestant either by purchase, by gift, or inheritance. It was also made impossible for him to acquire it by marriage; if a Protestant heiress were to marry a Catholic, her estates would immediately pass to her Protestant next of kin. 'A Catholic bishop was liable to be hanged, and rewards were offered for the detection of such dignitaries as were unlicensed. A Catholic layman might be compelled, under pain of a year's imprisonment, to say where he had last heard mass and what priest celebrated it. . . . Yet priests multiplied in spite of the "priest hunters." . . . The Penal Laws may be said to have done good to Irish Catholicism. But they brought the law itself into abhorrence. . . . Public schools were provided, but the teaching in them must be Protestant. There was a reward of ten pounds for the discovery of a Catholic schoolmaster. . . . The law was broken that education

[1] A beginning was made with the Penal Laws in 1697 and the Code received additions up to 1746—after which it was gradually repealed.

might be given, and Catholic Ireland, with its religion and its teaching carried on at the risk of penalties, illegally, was more than ever turned into a vast secret society. It had to fear the informer and it began to inflict its own penalties. . . . If a man were known to be about to denounce a priest, he was inevitably threatened, beaten, or even killed: and then the whole community was certain to shelter the law-breaker.' [1]

As with many other manifestations of tyranny, the Penal Code was largely the product of fear. The ally of the Irish in the Williamite wars was Louis XIV, who, a few years before, had—to use modern parlance—liquidated his Huguenot subjects, and who, if victory fell to his arms, would no doubt treat Protestant Ireland as he had treated Protestant France. As Louis had stripped his heretics of power in the state, so Protestant rule stripped Catholics—some of the provisions of the Irish Penal Code were moulded on the French decrees. And it was a misfortune, a bitter misfortune for Ireland, that the official utterances of the Vatican had again and again given colour to the idea that a Catholic was necessarily a traitor to his Protestant sovereign.[2] That, and the fact that religious tolerance was not yet esteemed a virtue, is the only excuse for measures which set up a yet more impassable barrier between the races and religions of Ireland. Protestantism under the Penal Code was a ruling caste as well as a faith;

[1] *Student's History of Ireland*, Gwynn.

[2] One instance: in 1662 a suggested address of loyalty (to Charles II) by the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland was rebuked by the nuncio at Brussels as a violation of their faith.

Catholicism a subject caste, 'without property, without estimation.'

These Penal Laws might well have been framed for the express purpose of encouraging the hereditary curses of Ireland: contempt for the authority of law, the mean trade of the informer, and the 'secret society' habit. Then the fact that the Code was never fully enforced, that decent Protestants combined with their Catholic neighbours to elude its provisions, and that, as years went on, it was openly flouted—that in itself entailed lessening of respect for authority, in Protestants as well as in Catholics. No Catholic bishop ever suffered the extreme penalty, and years before the repeal measure of 1778 bishops were going openly about their duties and there were 'mass houses' even in Ulster.

But although there are patriotic historians who would like to make the Penal Code entirely accountable for the national failing of lawlessness, the likelihood is that there have been other influences at work. Something, perhaps, may be due to the fact that there has never been a tradition of accepted and strongly administered law and authority in Ireland; the Brehon laws, which every good Nationalist admires from a distance, were the awards of judges, not a codified system. Further, they were enforced by public opinion, not by any definite machinery of the State; and this Gaelic tradition of public opinion as supreme authority may have counted for more than a little in the 'secret society' habit—the essential condition for a secret society is a public opinion that sets itself above the law. It is even possible that the frequent Irish tolerance of assassination may in part be a heritage from the days of Brehon law, which treated

the homicide indulgently. When the Normans came to Ireland their habit was to exact a life for a life and hang the murderer; to the contemporary Irish the killing of a man must have seemed a lighter matter, since it could be atoned for by a fine paid in cattle. However excellent the Brehon awards, a tradition that substitutes public opinion for legal enforcement, and sets little value on human life, may well, as time goes on, be an influence favourable to lawlessness.

And yet another fact to take note of: the fact, namely, that in two other island races, those of Sicily and Corsica, there has manifested itself the same disease of conspiracy and lawlessness, with symptoms which are often strongly reminiscent of Irish defiance of authority. There is the same dominance of 'brotherhood' morality and lack of reluctance to shed blood; the same hatred and pursuit of the informer and, in Sicily at least (I cannot speak for Corsica), the practice that has often been prevalent in Ireland of wreaking vengeance on animals. It was no penal laws against Catholics that produced that most formidable of lawless organizations, the Mafia; which, until a few years ago, when Fascism took it in hand with resolution, defied the best efforts of law and police —and may still be in existence underground! It can hardly be a coincidence that these island communities, one and all, have been addicted to conspiracy, private war, murder, and the setting up of authority of the *Vehmgericht* order. . . . Is the explanation no more than this, that in island communities, living apart, the combative impulse, from century to century, has had to find its satisfaction in blood-feud and internal quarrel? No nation—no form of community—has ever come into

being without aid from the outsider, aid in the shape of opposition and conflict; Ireland's quarrelling kingdoms and scores of petty chieftainships were the natural result of a position of immunity from outside attack. Human nature being what it is, Irish immunity from outside conflict meant Irish liability to internal quarrel; when the Anglo-Norman immigrants were once well established, they succumbed to the same geographical influences, quarrelled and rebelled in the same ready fashion as the Celts they had in part dispossessed. In an age when humanity was largely bred to fighting, the inhabitant of Ireland, whether Norman or Celt, had no one but his fellow-countrymen to fight with; he did not even take part in the Crusades—which were a factor for peace in other parts of Europe, by drawing hot blood to the East.

. . . . . .

Whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the causes of Irish lawlessness, its existence cannot be denied. Even to-day, under an administration free from British interference, there exists in the Free State, in addition to ordinary courts of law, a military tribunal with special powers for dealing with 'political' crime. This tribunal has been set up under one of the articles of the Constitution and—spite of occasional complaints in the Press—there seems to be some excuse for its continued existence. The adherents of the I.R.A. make a point of refusing to 'recognize' the courts of their native country until a republic is declared; until then, the courts are merely instruments of British tyranny. A prisoner who was charged with possession of fire-arms

without a licence declared that he was authorized to carry them by the I.R.A., 'which is the only lawful authority in the country'—and his case is by no means isolated. This type of swaggering defiance is probably more noisy than dangerous, but a serious result of the lawless tradition is terrorizing of witnesses. The taint of the informer still clings to the witness, and the informer is liable to penalty; hence it is sometimes impossible for the police to get a conviction. Those who could give material evidence dare not come forward, or, if brought forward against their will, dare not speak the truth in the witness-box. I was told of one such instance where a witness who was actually present when a crime was committed professed not to recognize its perpetrator—who lived near by and whose face must have been familiar. In Cork, a few months before my visit, there had been a curious outrage, in the shape of a raid of masked men, about a dozen in number, on a gathering of Freemasons, assembled for their annual dinner. No actual injury was inflicted on the guests, but while some of the raiders covered them with revolvers, others made hay of the premises; they upset the tables and threw the food about, smashing the crockery and furniture. The police, as a matter of course, inquired of the various persons present whether, in spite of their disguise, they had been able to recognize any of the raiders. One, at least, among the victims had his suspicions, but he told the interrogating officer bluntly that he had a wife and children to think of and didn't want his house burned down. . . . Given difficulty of this kind in obtaining evidence, it is understandable enough that the Free State Government

has, so far, declined to dispense with its military tribunal.[1]

It would not be too much to say that Ireland has had bad luck in the matter of incentives to lawlessness. The Penal Code is an abuse of the past, the power of the landlord has gone, and after it the British ascendancy; but Fianna Fail, when it started the economic war with Great Britain, thereby afforded a new pretext for conspiracy and defiance of the law. A pretext whereof the present generation of Irishmen has not been slow to avail itself. The fact that, in the case of smuggled cattle, the financial loss falls on another government does not lessen the danger to Saorstát Eireann of encouraging an instinct that has never been in need of encouragement.

When Sir Henry Wilson was killed on his doorstep by Irish gunmen, civilians who had witnessed the shooting promptly gave chase; and this behaviour of the London man in the street has often been contrasted with the behaviour, on similar occasions, of Irish witnesses of crime. The two gunmen who saw an unarmed milkman and postman on their tracks were probably—poor souls!

[1] 'In the Dail yesterday Mr. W. Norton (Lab.) asked the president of the Executive Council if it was intended to revoke the Order bringing into force the provisions of Article 2A of the Constitution in view of the unpopularity of that Article.

'Mr. de Valera replied that the answer was in the negative. Although there had been considerable improvement in the situation in recent months, organized crimes of violence were still occurring with which the ordinary courts were unable to deal, and the Government felt that the time had not yet arrived when it would be justified in suspending the operation of that Article.'—*Irish Press*, November 29, 1935.

—not a little astonished at the workings of a tradition to which they were strange, the tradition of the law-abiding citizen. Perhaps they would never have ventured to shoot if they had realized that when they killed a man in a London street they were up against more than the police. It may be taken for granted that what they expected was that connivance—instinctive or terrorized—on the part of the civilian population which has time and again enabled the Irish murderer to make good his escape from justice.

. . . . . .

Many years have gone by since I first made acquaintance with what is accounted Synge's masterpiece, *The Playboy of the Western World.* It was then being played in London by the company from the Abbey Theatre, and that, I suppose, was the immediate reason why I sat down to study it in print. Though it is so many years ago, I still remember the horror whereby I was thrilled when I read the scene between the admiring girls and the slayer of his father; the girls bringing little country offerings of butter and eggs for the man whose murder is above all other murders, a parricide. And I remember also that, a few days later, I met some theatre-going friends of mine who had just seen the *Playboy* and were bubbling over with admiration alike for the play and the company. They asked me when was I going to see it and I said I hoped never; the subject was so hideous that it sickened me. They thought me ridiculous, had seen nothing horrible about it; it was all so charming, so poetically conceived and lightly played. When I suggested that the theme of the play was blood-lust,

they obviously had no idea of what I meant; and when I added that the play had occasioned angry protests from Irish audiences, the statement seemed merely to puzzle them. Having lived all their lives in the orderly atmosphere of pre-war England where killing was emphatically murder, the glorification of murder for its own dear sake was something so far outside their ken that they could not comprehend it when they saw it. The Irish audiences who resented the production resented it, one must suppose, because they realized its implications; realized that the attitude of its characters towards homicide was little different from that of the Zulu—who only when he had a death to his credit arrived at full manhood and adorned his head with the ring. . . . I do not suggest for a moment that the morality of the *Playboy* is taken from life or that parricide would be condoned by the ordinary Irish peasant; this, however, I do suggest, that a play on such a theme could hardly have been written except among a people to whom murder is not murder, as the Saxon understands it, and who have behind them a long tradition of lawlessness.

. . . . . .

Not the least of the difficulties to be overcome by any government of Ireland, whatever its status and political complexion, is this long tradition of the lawlessness which is another word for bad citizenship. The history of the Irishman in the United States affords proof enough that it is a tradition not easily broken; Tammany is only one of the results of Irish activity in affairs of local government. As an individual, the

Irishman abroad has again and again made his honourable mark; the 'Wild Geese' who scattered when the Stuarts fell, and took service with the rulers of European states, produced more than their rightful proportion of military leaders and administrators.[1] And the same applies to the British colonial service: there was truth in a remark that was once made to me by an Irishman opposed to extremist views of independence. 'Why,' he said, 'should we cut ourselves off from the empire which Irishmen have largely created?' . . . But if that is the record of the Irishman abroad, when he comes in single spies, in battalions—save as military battalions, an Irish brigade—he has never been conspicuous for good citizenship. New York has not been the better for his mass immigration; Glasgow and Liverpool do not welcome him—nor, I believe, do some of the cities of Australia. Perhaps the lapse of years and generations is needed to eradicate the anti-government habit (which makes for corruption) and instil the sense of law and order. Meanwhile the difficulty of administration in a country whose democracy is frequently lacking in that useful sense is illustrated by the following announcement—which I quote from the newspage of the *Irish Independent* of June 8, 1935:

'Westmeath County Council has been dissolved by the Minister for Local Government and Public Health.

'Mr. O'Kelly took this action yesterday. He announced that the duties of the council had been transferred to Mr. Patrick Joseph Bartley, who is at present acting as Commissioner for Leix. His order will take effect to-day.

[1] See Note. *The Wild Geese.*

'An inquiry was held last week at Mullingar into the manner in which the council was discharging its duties.

'This is the first county council to be dissolved since the last local government elections.

'Dissolved bodies include South Tipperary County Council, Longford and Trim Urban Councils, Waterford, Laoghis, and South Tipperary Boards of Health, and Roscommon Town Commissioners.'

That item of news in itself would suggest that there is nothing particularly surprising in the Free State's drift towards dictatorship. When democratic institutions are tainted with corruption, or run by the inept, it is only a matter of time till they are superseded by a form of administration which, if theoretically less desirable, is in actual practice more workable.

XI. OF CHANGES AND INDUSTRIES

THERE are certain respects in which even the staunchest adherent of the old order will admit that the new has done well. In the first place, as regards afforestation; a source of wealth, and likewise of employment, to which so little attention was paid of late years that it was estimated, in 1934, that only one per cent of Irish land was under trees. Because it necessitates cultivation on a large scale, timber naturally suffers from the break-up of estates and its consequent neglect or destruction by small owners; and if Saorstát Eireann intends to supply her own needs in timber, as in all other articles of commerce, it is clear that she must set about increasing her acreage of forest. The Minister for Lands, Senator Connolly, in a broadcast talk given in 1934, put that point to his listeners—instancing the need to substitute Irish paper, home-grown and made, for the present supply from abroad. 'We hope,' he said, 'to have paper mills in the near future within the State which will supply our entire needs, including newsprint. If these mills were working to-morrow, we would require to get the pulp for them from abroad and, whatever we do, we will have to continue to import that pulp from abroad for many years'—forestry being an investment which would only show long-term results. (Since that speech was made, the plan it foreshadowed has already been partially translated into action; in June 1935 another minister — for Commerce and Industry — announced the forthcoming establishment of a paper-

I T A.

BRINGING MILK TO THE CREAMERY

B. Stansfield

HIRING FAIR IN ENNISKILLEN, NORTHERN IRELAND

making factory at Clondalkin, in County Dublin, and his hope that, by the following year, 'Irish paper of all classes' would be available from Clondalkin and other mills.)

Another undoubted improvement is in the matter of roads. No one who remembers the Irish country-side in days gone by will fail to notice the difference, the betterment, in the system of rural communication; the Free State Government has more than done its duty in this respect. And at present the roads are ample—in many districts more than ample—for the traffic they are called on to carry; even on holidays, and in the neighbourhood of cities, there are no dusty processions returning at night, such as those with which our suburbs are familiar; and in less frequented regions one may drive for hours, through Ireland at its loveliest, and hardly meet another car. It should be some time yet before there is any serious interference with the pastime, popular in rural districts, of throwing a weighty ball along several miles of road; the winner being the player who covers the course in the fewest number of throws. Success in the game is not only a matter of strong arm and long drive; there is call for considerable skill when it comes to the turning of corners.

In addition to building good new roads, the Free State has built many new houses; and if the projected industries all grow and flourish, it will certainly have to build many more—to cope with the resultant shifting of its wage-earning population. By long tradition, Ireland is an agricultural country, a peasant country—its population land-hungry and living by the soil. But that state of things, it should be remembered, prevails

only while the Irishman remains in his native country, where, save in the North, urban industries have hitherto been few; when he leaves Ireland to settle elsewhere, it often comes to pass that he sheds the country habits of his Irish youth and shows a marked preference for urban wage-earning and the crowded life of the street. The emigrants who, for decade after decade, streamed across the Atlantic, to begin life again in America: those emigrants, in the vast majority of cases, were country-born and country-bred. Nevertheless, when they landed in America, in the vast majority of cases, they made no attempt to return to the familiar soil; they took to the mean street life of America—took to it like ducks to water, settled down in their close-packed Irish districts and stayed there. Took to it by preference, when good land was open to the enterprising; for in the early days of mass Irish emigration the United States were still thinly populated; a country of wide, unappropriated spaces of which the immigrant Irishman might have had his full share had he cared to claim it. The claim was not made; he left it to settlers of other races to redeem the unappropriated spaces from the wild and bring them into cultivation. It might have been thought that the Irishman, with his peasant tradition and training behind him, was peculiarly fitted to succeed as a settler and break the new ground of America; but the fact remains that, as a general rule, he was attracted by the slums of New York and Chicago, not by the lands that lay open in the west. Sir Horace Plunkett, in a work dealing with the Ireland of his times, wrote of the fact and regretted it; regretted that the Irish race in America had thrown away a chance that would

never return when it forgot its skill in the work of the land and elected to crowd into cities. (Where the Irish race made its mark in the United States was largely in connection with city politics—on the whole, not a mark to be proud of!) This readiness to desert the countryside is a tendency that may have to be reckoned with as the new Irish industries grow. The wages of the country labourer are low and the life of the peasant-farmer is always toilsome and sometimes ill rewarded; if the factory prospers, no doubt they will listen to its siren.[1]

It is impossible to travel for long about rural Ireland without coming across reminders of Horace Plunkett; reminders in the shape of the frequent creameries which, in the beginning, were the outcome of his faith and work. Horace Plunkett was the apostle of agricultural co-operation in Ireland, and, as such, the friend and champion of the small farmer against the traditional tyranny of the gombeen man. Few men have worked more steadily and wisely for the general good of their country; but the fact that his life had been spent in the service of Ireland could not save his property in the turbulent day of the 'Troubles.' On a night in the year 1922 the house he had built went up in flames; destroyed, one imagines, from sheer hooligan pleasure in destruction rather than a grudge against its owner. Plunkett was a guiding spirit of the Irish Agricultural Organization Society which advised farmers on agricultural matters and generally carried on much of the

[1] A recent estimate of the average wage of farm-workers boarding with their employers is for men £12 15*s.*, for women £8 10*s.* per annum.

work that is nowadays performed by an official department. The co-operative creamery system had its beginnings in the late eighties and early nineties; by 1893 some thirty had come into being and the number now operating in the Free State is about two hundred—in addition to between three and four hundred separating stations. A few years ago it was estimated that eighty per cent of the dairy produce of the country passed through the co-operative creameries.

. . . . . .

Housing, according to official statement, is proceeding at a satisfactory rate; a statement corroborated by the obvious new suburbs of many of the larger towns. As in most other Free State activities, the idea of self-sufficiency is stressed; the Minister for Local Government declared, in a broadcast statement, that 'our ultimate aim is an all-Irish house . . . and I take this opportunity of reminding all persons engaged in house-building that State grants will not be forthcoming unless the home materials available are used to the fullest extent. I have given special instructions to my inspectors to pay particular attention to this matter and to report specially in any instances where this important requirement has been disregarded.' . . .

So far as my experience goes, in Ireland, as in England, there is not much to be said, from an aesthetic, architectural point of view, for the generality of streets and suburbs that have come into being of late. Irish local authorities, I believe, have certain controlling powers in the matter, but the probability is that—like local authorities in other regions—their taste in building is

conspicuous by its absence and they rather admire the unattractive little houses that are springing up under their auspices. Whatever the reason, unattractive little houses are multiplying; though I hasten to add that I have never seen in Ireland anything quite so aesthetically shocking as some of our own suburban villa-residences; the kind with sham beams stuck on to their fronts which are described by their builders as 'Tudor.' The saddest Irish novelty in the way of house-building is the roofing of the cabin with corrugated iron—or rather the re-roofing when the original thatch wears out. I never saw the abomination above walls that looked new; but again and again, by the side of the road or from railway windows, I saw cabins whose owners, when it came to re-roofing, had effected the horrid substitution. The result is beyond measure lamentable — a disfigurement, a scar on the landscape; it is the overhang of its thatch that gives its cosiness as well as its character to the white-washed dwelling of the Irish peasant — and with the new machine-made covering there is never an inch of overhang. It fits as tight as a skull-cap to the oblong box which is a cabin. A cabin so skull-capped is the meanest-looking type of residence that it has yet been my ill fortune to behold; suggesting, as it does, economy of effort, economy of thought, and an utter indifference to appearances. And also, one imagines, considerable indifference to comfort. Thatch has the merit of being warm in winter and cool in summer, while corrugated iron has no such climatic advantages; it lets in heat, it lets in cold, and when rain comes down it rattles on the iron in the manner of dancing peas. It is to be hoped and prayed that the

disfiguring practice does not spread throughout the country; but we live in an age of progress, which is another name for machine-made goods, and obviously it costs less of the time, which may be money, to roof your house with sheets of ready-made metal than with thatch. But, in the interests of Ireland's lovable beauty, someone should denounce the horrid custom. . . . Perhaps corrugated iron is 'home material' and therefore permissible to good citizens of Saorstát Eireann; but if it isn't, the Minister for Local Government might be able to do something about it!

In one district where extensive rebuilding has taken place there has been a clean sweep of the old thatched roofs, and likewise of the dwellings they covered; the said district being the suburb, or adjunct, of Galway City, known as the Claddagh—which, being interpreted, is 'beach.' A guide-book that is only of yesterday (1932) describes it as 'the curious fisherman's quarter' of Galway, where 'the low, thatched, white-washed cottages are built haphazard and numbered indiscriminately.' Such was the Claddagh in the days when I first set eyes on it and such it was only a year or two ago. To all intents and purposes, a village; a primitive Irish village, cobbled lanes with a runnel down the middle—yet tacked on to the outskirts of a city!

There was a reason for this contrast of Galway and its Claddagh suburb: the town and its suburb were inhabited by different races. 'The Tribes of Galway,' who made and held the town, were men of Anglo-Norman blood; the Claddagh was the 'Irishtown' where the Celtic race lived apart. This Celtic quarter had its own customs, strictly adhered to; in times past it had

a ruler, a 'king' of its own, whose authority, if not recognized by the world at large, was duly recognized by his subjects. The women of the quarter went clad, for generations, in a distinctive dress of red petticoat and cloak and wore distinctive rings, which were handed down as heirlooms, with a device of two hands holding a crowned heart. (Whereof, nowadays, inexpensive imitations can be bought by the tourist in any trinket shop in Galway.) Even when the cloak and red petticoat were no longer the customary wear of its womenfolk, the Claddagh continued to be one of the attractions of the city; the tourist, inevitably, was led or directed to admire the picturesque incongruity which to-day is a thing of the past. If one accepts the word of a signpost, the Claddagh is still in existence, and probably a quarter of the town is still called by that name. But that quarter of the town is of yesterday's erection; in place of the 'low, thatched, white-washed cottages' are tidy little concrete terraces—and alas, alas, they are unprepossessing as tidy! No doubt it was time the picturesque old Claddagh was cleaned out—it must have been appallingly insanitary; all the same it is, to say the least of it, unfortunate that the needed improvement in sanitary conditions has been accompanied by so marked a deterioration in the outward appearance of the quarter. The day of the Claddagh as attraction for the visitor is over—it is just a new suburb, unimaginatively built; a fact which, in all probability, accounts for the unappreciative terms in which I have heard it spoken of by innkeeping and catering inhabitants of Galway and neighbourhood. Thatched and odoriferous, the Claddagh drew money to the town; to-day, in its commonplace

cleanliness, with its terraces planted by a wide asphalt road, no tourist in his senses would think it worth the price of a bus fare. Neither (so I gathered) are the inhabitants of the quarter as grateful as they should be for the up-to-date accommodation which the town authorities have placed at their disposal. It is not only that they are accustomed to their cabins and their atmosphere of picturesque squalor, but the advantages of the new and sanitary dwellings have had to be paid for in cash. In the good old days of thatch and grubbiness, rentals in the Claddagh were a shilling or eighteenpence a week; under the present improved conditions they run to well over six shillings. The fact explains a certain amount of present discontent in the rehoused fishing population of Galway; but the next generation, bred to cleanliness of domicile and decent sanitation, will presumably feel less regret for a past economical squalor.

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The attempt of the party in power to make Ireland wholly independent of the outside world may be a striving towards an impossible goal but, whether it succeed or whether it fail, it is certainly a stimulus to inventive enterprise. Inevitably so; if the citizen of Saorstát Eireann is to dispense with foreign imports and yet maintain himself in necessaries of life and a reasonable allowance of creature comforts, he must find substitutes for many of the raw materials which at present are imported, as well as for manufactured goods. Coal is a necessary import which, at present, comes chiefly from England; but those whose motto is 'Ourselves Alone' hope for the day when coal will be super-

seded not only by the power drawn from Irish rivers but by the native product of peat adapted to the uses of industry. With that end in view emissaries of the Free State have been sent to observe the experiments being made, in Germany and elsewhere, for the purpose of increasing the fuel possibilities of peat; and while I was in Ireland, in the summer of 1935, it was announced, on the authority of the Industrial Research Council, that an official committee was investigating various designs for domestic stoves, cooking ranges, and industrial boilers with a view to ascertaining which were best suited to the use of turf as fuel. It is not only in the form of fuel that it is hoped to make use of the natural wealth of the Irish turf-supply; the same paper, the *Irish Independent,* which announced the activities of the stove-and-boiler committee came out with a flaring headline of 'Stockings from Peat!' Peat stockings, by the by, are silk stockings; that is to say, they will be when they arrive. At present, however, they are not on the market, though it seems that the Industrial Research Council regards them as a near possibility. Other possibilities of peat-utilization into which the Council was inquiring were the production of wax for industrial purposes and the production of industrial alcohol. Nor is it only by means of peat-products that it is intended, in future, to lessen the Free State's dependence on trade with the foreigner; if the hopes of the research workers engaged are fulfilled, there is a certain sand, found at Cloyne, in County Cork, which in time to come will supply the Irish public with Irish-made gramophone records. Then in County Mayo there are extensive deposits of silica and clay, and the Council's investigations

into their properties indicate that these deposits are suitable for use in the manufacture of pottery, and also, perhaps, in the manufacture of glass; while the possibilities of a commercial use of seaweed are also under investigation. . . . And whether or no these investigations develop into factories producing Irish goods, they are of interest because indicative of the determination of a section of the Irish people—the section that at present holds the reins of power—to live on their own resources.

This policy of economic isolation is an experiment that could have no hope of success in any but a country largely agricultural; nor, one may add, in any country where the standard of living was high and small luxuries in general use. An official estimate, published in 1932, gives the percentage of the occupied population engaged in agriculture as about four times as great as that engaged in non-agricultural industries. Ireland, further, is a country of peasant-proprietors, and countrymen who live, wholly or in part, from the produce of their holdings are not, like the wage-earners in factories or shops, liable to be deprived of their all in a season of bad trade. Money, to them, is not the absolute necessity that it is to the urban wage-earner; to a certain extent, at least, they can supply their daily needs without it. If Mr. de Valera succeeds in the building of his economic wall round the Irish Free State, his success will in great part be due to the fact that a high percentage of Free State citizens are engaged in producing food for themselves, not articles they sell for food.

The weak spot in Irish industry and the weak spot in Irish agriculture is one and the same, and it is spelt

Gaeltacht; the Irish-speaking region of the west. There are districts in Connaught and Donegal where the soil is too poor to afford decent living to the crofters who scrape at it; where the only alternative to emigration is some form of local industry to supplement the sparse products of the land. So far attempts to organize such industries on an adequate scale have been anything but successful; their failure, in fact, has been admitted by both political parties and the only difference of opinion seems to be as to whether the present Government or its predecessor is entitled to the larger share of blame. Knitting and weaving centres, it was stated in the Dail in 1935, had been closed down for lack of custom and the department responsible left with thousands of yards of unsaleable tweed on its hands. The American demand for iodine was a thing of the past, and no alternative use had yet been discovered for the seaweed from which it was obtained. In the course of a debate on the problem, the Minister for Lands declared that, in his opinion, 'the real cure for the Gaeltacht would be to draw a red line from Donegal to Kerry around those areas in which it was a crime to have human beings living, and to take those people and put them on the ranch lands, as they were trying to do.' The 'ranch lands' being the large farms and properties, hitherto devoted to the cattle-rearing for which the Government is now trying to substitute tillage. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the policy of migration from the barren west has made a beginning at Athboy in County Meath. . . . To be noted that this problem of the Gaeltacht is complicated by considerations of language; the impoverished inhabitants of Connemara and Kerry are the

hope of the enthusiasts for a Gaelic Ireland; if they leave the isolation of their native bogs and mountains, how long will they preserve their Irish heritage of speech? There may have been need for the warning of an Opposition deputy, to the effect that 'if the Government had made up their minds that maintaining the people in the Gaeltacht in reasonable comfort was impossible, the time had come to face the issue and the language must look after itself. It would be an intolerable and wholly indefensible thing that the residents of the Gaeltacht should be kept in misery and poverty, for no other reason than to preserve the language.' . . .

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One of the new industries of whose essential value there can be little doubt is a factory where the raw material is the ancient cow. In years gone by, when the British Isles traded freely with each other, the Irish cow, when its life work was over, is said to have reappeared in Great Britain, in the shape of something potted or tinned. Nowadays that market is no longer open to its carcass and some other use has to be found for it. The factory at Roscrea turns it chiefly into fertilizers—bone manure and so forth—but also, to a certain extent, into edible matter, its purity guaranteed by inspection. But the value of its products is not the only value of the factory; before its establishment the aged Irish cow was a problem, from the mere fact that it persisted in living, or rather in being let live, even when its existence was useless to humanity and probably a burden to itself. When I asked why the owner did not destroy it when it reached the senile stage, I was

old that the carcass, unless otherwise disposed of, had o be buried; it could not be left to decompose in the)pen air. And since the burial of a cow means a good ;pell of work, the tendency was to defer it. The Roscrea factory is of double benefit to the farmer: it saves him :he wasteful labour of grave-digging and turns a useless :arcass to profit—the price he gets for his veteran cow will go to the buying of a heifer.

XII. THE SIX COUNTIES AND SOME OF THEIR PROBLEMS : THE ORANGE LILY AND THE EASTER

LIKE many other convenient habits, the use of the term 'Ulster' as a synonym for the State of Northern Ireland is not altogether correct; the State of Northern Ireland is a part of Ulster, containing only six of the counties included in the former province. The other three—Donegal, Cavan, and Monaghan—when the island was partitioned, were enclosed within the Irish Free State. Still, often enough, in our common parlance, the Six Counties of the North are known as Ulster; so, where convenient, I shall use the term in that sense.

The State of Northern Ireland came into being in 1920—created by the Government of Ireland Act of that year. It consists of 'the six counties of Antrim, Down, Armagh, Fermanagh, Tyrone, and Londonderry, with the county boroughs of Belfast and Londonderry. Its area is 5,237 square miles—approximately one-sixth of the total land area of Ireland. The seaboard to the north and east,' measured on the five-fathom line, 'is 245 miles long, and the land boundary to the south and west about 200 miles long.' It is the most thickly populated region of Ireland; its one-sixth of land area carries considerably more than a fourth of the entire population, numbering over a million and a quarter. And of that million and a quarter about a third are Roman Catholics.

Of the Protestant population the majority are Presbyterians, as becomes their Scottish descent; the Church of

Ireland, which comes next as to numbers, includes most of the descendants of English immigrants. The foundations of the State of Northern Ireland may be said to have been laid by order of King James the First and Sixth in the year 1608, the year of the Great Plantation. Two counties of Ulster, Down and Antrim, had already, to a great extent, been settled from oversea; but it was in 1608 — the year after what is known as the Flight of the Earls [1] — that there was a definite and ordered settlement of the other northern counties. The Ulster Plantation was essentially a precaution against further uprising; a settlement by immigrants brought over from Scotland on the promise of property in Irish land. These men of the Plantation were a sturdy race who worked the land of which they took possession—took possession by methods which to them and their contemporaries were permissible. To the Englishman and Scot of the seventeen-hundreds the native Irish were a race not only inimical but inferior, to be ousted by the settler if need arose—in the same fashion as the native red men were dispossessed of their hunting-grounds by European settlers in America. The estates and dominions of the chieftains who had fled the country were declared confiscate and the lands best worth having divided up amongst the planters, or 'undertakers'; so called because they undertook to hold their property on certain conditions, including defence against the Irish, in case of rebellion. The City Companies also had their share of confiscated Ulster; Londonderry owes its rise to

[1] The departure from Ireland of the Ulster chieftains who had been the most formidable opponents of English sovereignty. See Chapter VI.

prosperity, as well as its official designation, to connection with the City of London. . . . From that time, three centuries and more ago, north-east Ireland, in race, in religion, and usually in outlook, has differed from the rest of the country. Which does not mean that its policy and interests have always been identical with those of the neighbour island; there have been times and seasons when it stood in open opposition to the British Government. The Volunteer movement of the seventeen-eighties, which demanded and obtained, by its threat of force, the removal of restrictions placed on Irish trade—that movement had its active beginnings in the city of Belfast. The Ulsterman of the eighteenth century was as stubborn in his determination not to be coerced out of what he deemed his rights as his descendant, the Ulsterman of 1914, swearing to the Covenant and refusing to submit himself to the authority of law made in Dublin.

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'The north-east corner of Ireland has produced men in the front rank out of all proportion to her numbers. In the ranks of judges there stand Lord Cairns, the greatest judge of the Victorian era and probably of the nineteenth century, and Lord Macnaghten. Among soldiers there are such men as John Nicholson, the Bayard of India, and Sir George White. Among ambassadors and statesmen there stand the Cannings of English and Indian fame, Lord Dorchester of Canada, a proconsol in the same rank as Robert Clive and Warren Hastings, Lord Castlereagh, Sir R. Hart, Lord Bryce, Lord Dufferin, and the great figure of Lord Lawrence,

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who more than any other single man saved India in the crisis of the mutiny of 1857. Among metaphysicians there are such men as Francis Hutcheson and William James, and among writers the Brontës, William Hazlitt, and Sir Samuel Ferguson, the real precursor of the Celtic revival. Among scientists there stand Sir Hans Sloane, the founder of the British Museum, Joseph Black, the discoverer of carbon dioxide, and Lord Kelvin, the Napoleon of science in the nineteenth century. It is a long bead-roll and might easily have been longer had we not excluded the names of living men.' [1]

Nor is it only under the British flag that the Ulsterman has made his mark; his record in the United States is no less outstanding. Of the first thirty presidents of the United States, Ulster origin can be claimed for nine —nearly a third; an astonishing proportion when one considers the size of the province and its population and the mingling of races in America. This dominant quality in the race that inhabits the north-eastern counties of Ireland has been variously explained and accounted for; it is sometimes ascribed to the effects of cross-fertilization, the mingling of the native Irish blood with that of the invading planters. Professor Macalister, however —whose words I have quoted more than once in these pages—advances a different theory to account for the special characteristics of the Ulsterman; for him they are the product of Fate, in the guise of climate. Ulster, he points out, long before the day of alien plantation, long before the coming of the Anglo-Norman, was the province that bred the dominant race of Irishmen. It was the land the invader found it hardest to subdue, the

[1] Murray and Law, *Ireland* (The Nations of To-day Series).

land of the O'Neills and O'Donnells who again and again defied the English deputies and came nearer than any to the overthrow of English rule. It is, so he holds, the bleaker, more invigorating climate of the north which has given the Ulsterman, whatever his race, an energy and force of character which is rarer in the milder climate of the south. Save in the north-eastern quarter of the island, the Irish climate, 'though pleasant enough, is probably the most enervating in Europe,' encouraging habits of lassitude and *laisser-faire*; and this climate, he suggests, is the reason why Irishmen, not of the north, more often rise to success and distinction abroad than in their own country—where the atmosphere which 'makes the land a green and flowery paradise . . . poisons human energy with the mechanical efficiency and the impersonal ruthlessness of a leaky gas-pipe.' On the other hand, the professor continues, 'it was written in the Book of Fate that he who finds a dwelling in the north-eastern quarter has for birthright an energy, quickened by the winds blowing over the northern snows of Scotland, which the rest of the folk must purchase at a great price, and must fight a losing battle to maintain. It was the north-eastern quarter that created the Great Dorsey Fort and the boundary wall called the Black Pig's Dyke, in or about the third century A.D., to keep out southern aggression. It was the north-eastern quarter which gave the greatest trouble to England. It was the north-eastern quarter which was first divided into shires, so that the rigours of local government might the more easily be applied to its turbulent inhabitants. It was the north-eastern quarter which, in desperation, England finally cleared of its

inhabitants and filled with colonists pledged to her own service.' . . . A substitution which, as a matter of course, drew a yet clearer line of demarcation between Ulster and the rest of Ireland.

Whatever the reason—whether vigour of climate or mere difference of race—Ireland to-day is a country of two States: one of the twain, the larger, avowedly desiring to absorb the reluctant smaller. So far as the onlooker can guess, there is only one method whereby the coveted absorption is likely to be realized: the penetration of the Protestant North by the more prolific Catholics of the South. . . . There are those on both sides of the frontier who look on this eventual swamping of North by South as inevitable; as it probably is, if the Free State's birth-rate remains at its present high level, and if political democracy — the counting of heads — remains for the next thirty years or so on the basis of Irish institutions.

When the break was made with the old regime and the two states of Ireland came into being, a good many Irishmen were not without hope that before many years were over the inconvenience of frontier and partition would be recognized and the bitterness engendered in an epoch of 'Troubles' be forgotten. The years that have passed have not justified those hopes; on the contrary, the tendency of Free State policy has been to widen, rather than decrease, the gulf between the 'Black North' and its neighbour. Recent constitutional developments in the Free State indicate the near approach of dictatorship, and dictatorship personified by Mr. de Valera is not likely to gain acceptance in the Northern State. As noted in an earlier chapter, the language

policy of the Free State Government would, if successful, be yet another obstacle to union; an English-speaking North might well be more reluctant than it is at present to yield up its separate identity to a nation whose language it did not understand. That, however, is only a problematic difficulty; spite of discouragement, the English language is still the common tongue of the two Irish States. A far more serious obstacle to union is the economic policy of the present Free State Government; since it aims at independence of the world in general and Great Britain in particular, it would spell sheer ruin to the industry and trade of the North. The industrial system which the Free State is endeavouring to build up is one of non-centralized industries; factories of a limited size, established in towns of a reasonable size, which will serve the needs of their surrounding country-population. No concentration of manufactures and population into equivalents of our Lancashire and Yorkshire industrial districts. The theoretical advantages of the system are obvious, but that there are practical difficulties in the way of its establishment the tendency of Dublin to grow is proof enough—to grow and to attract to itself the lion's share of new industries. And the union of the Six Counties with the rest of Ireland—the breaking down of the present economic barriers—would probably mean that the difficulties in the way of the new industrial system would magnify to impossibilities. The result of Sinn Fein principles applied in all their thoroughness to Northern Ireland would be a reduction in the volume of overseas trade that would bring about starving riot in the streets of Belfast. And another probability that may well give

pause: the competition of the northern industries might be more than dangerous to certain of the struggling industries in the Free State. The northern factories have at their command an organization, an experience, and skill in workmanship which as yet is lacking to those who run Free State industry; it is obvious, therefore, that northern competition, with its power of cheaper and better production, would upset the balance of the 'self-supporting' system. To take an instance: the factories now engaged in turning out shirts for Free State wear would hardly be able to hold their own with the old-established factories of Derry which supply the London market—and shirt-making is only one of the industries with which the Saorstát would have to compete. The factories and workshops which it has erected, and intends to erect, behind its customs barriers are so many vested interests; and in so far as they may be threatened by the competition of Ulster manufactures, these vested interests will hardly be eager for that union of Ireland under one flag which would substitute loss for present profit. Here, almost certainly, is an influence which will work for retention of the present barrier, and work the more stubbornly as industry flourishes in the Free State. Interest—material profit—will conflict with the ideal of Ireland 'a nation once again'! . . .

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Englishmen who have no acquaintance with Ulster are all too apt to think of it as 'the industrial north' of Ireland and, as such, an equivalent of the country round Wigan or the Potteries. Wherein they do the Six Counties an injustice; there is little of our Black

Country about them. The industrial North is likewise an agricultural and stock-raising North, a community of peasant-farmers as well as of factory hands. As has been said, the area of Ulster comprises about one-sixth of the total land surface of Ireland; but, according to the figures for 1934, of the total four-footed live stock of the country, it possessed close on a fifth. And those who think of Ulster as a region of slag-heaps and smoky chimneys have never tramped the Glens of Antrim or the shores of Lough Erne, looked up at the Mourne Mountains, or down on Derry and the Foyle. . . .

We in England associate the Northern State with religious intolerance as well as with industry; and it is in fact undeniable that the all-too-frequent religious riots of Belfast have no counterpart in any Free State city. It may be surmised that the reason for this better Free State record is not only superior tolerance on the part of the dominant faith; something, perhaps, is due to the fact that the dominant faith in the Free State is unquestionably dominant, in the matter of numbers; whereas there are districts in the State of Northern Ireland where Protestantism is by no means in the ascendant. It must be remembered, further, that antagonism between members of the two faiths is not wholly religious in character; although there are exceptions in plenty to the rule that the Roman Catholic is Nationalist in politics, desiring the union of Ulster with the Free State, still, it is among the Catholic population that union finds its strongest support. Annexation to the Free State, to the loyal Ulsterman, means subjection to a rule that he fears as well as hates —hence his vehemence of religious antagonism. Add

to this that it is impossible to live in Ireland and be indifferent to the past—whatever your race and whatever your faith, impossible! And if the memory of the Ulsterman is not as long as the memory of the Celt whom his forefathers ousted three centuries ago, it is long and tenacious enough! If it does not go back to Tara, Clontarf, and the Golden Age of Ireland, it goes back to Derry and Boyne Water.

Twelfth of July celebrations we know of; the bands and the Orange processions through the streets, the services in Protestant churches and chapels, to honour the memory of King William the Third and his glorious victory of the Boyne.[1] What is not so generally known is that Derry keeps her siege in perpetual memory; there is a day in December which her citizens celebrate with a bonfire and the burning of an effigy—the effigy of Lundy, the traitor governor, who would, if he could, have admitted the soldiers of King James. It is, of course, the Protestant citizens of Derry who keep up the bonfire custom, but Derry's population is no longer predominantly Protestant, and in one quarter, at least, it is wholly, or almost wholly, Catholic. This is the quarter of small houses known as Bogside, lying beyond the old city walls and below them. The Lundy bonfire is kindled within the walls, above the Bogside quarter —whose inhabitants, I was told, when the fun begins, take a hand in the ceremony by piling up their fires with turf. With the result that, from all the Bogside

[1] Interesting, by the by, to remember that the news of the Protestant victory of the Boyne was received with satisfaction in Rome; as a check to the policy of Louis XIV, at that time in bad odour at the Vatican.

chimneys, there pours simultaneously a cloud of smoke which, if the wind be only in the right direction, obscures the view of the Lundy bonfire and gets down the lungs of its crowd! One might hope the practice was no more than a hereditary game, if it were not that, in Derry as elsewhere in Ireland, the feud political-religious is of an enduring quality. There was evidence of its persistence during the Jubilee celebrations, in the endeavour of local Catholic authorities to prevent their youngsters from having any share in the public treat provided. The fiat went forth that there was to be no holiday in Catholic schools, no attendance at the festive tea. It is comforting to think that, when it came to the day, authority's fiat was widely ignored; the youthful 'Papishes' turned up in numbers at the tea, often with their parents in tow. Thanks to the prohibition of their pastors and masters, they came without the tickets which should have been applied for in advance; but the omission was winked at by festivity's organizers and the Catholic gate-crashers had their blow-out with the rest.

Human nature (Heaven be thanked for it!) is usually less stiff-necked than its organizations; so against the story of the Jubilee tea I can set another Derry story, this time of good fellowship. One of the promoters of a bazaar for the benefit of the Church of Ireland received an unsolicited contribution for the produce stall; the said contribution coming from her butcher and taking the shape of good sausages. Knowing the butcher to be a Roman Catholic, the recipient hesitated to accept his gift for the purpose of Protestant advantage; but when she suggested that the kindly meant

donation might get the donor into trouble with his priest, the bringer of the gift (also a Catholic) scorned the idea—couldn't the butcher do what he liked with his own property of sausages? . . . If it were possible to isolate religion from any contact with politics, the likelihood is that Catholic and Protestant, from end to end of Ireland, would be quiet and neighbourly enough; even as it is, there are plenty of neighbourly examples for the seeking. The wife of a clergyman who, in the time of the 'Troubles,' was living in a rural parish of the west, where only the minority of their neighbours were Protestants, once told me how, when danger was about, children would be sent long distances from Catholic farms to give a word of warning to the rectory. . . . Unfortunately, however, it is not possible to divorce religion from politics in Ireland; and in Ulster, as things are at present, less possible than elsewhere.

Mr. de Valera, apparently, has his own explanation of the religious feuds of the North. Referring in the Dail, in July 1935, to the recent Belfast riots, he is reported to have said that 'we know the fundamental cause. We know that, left to themselves, citizens of this country would be only too anxious to live in peace and friendship as fellow-citizens. Religion is being used as a cloak for things that are mean and shabby. Religion is being exploited for political motives. There is a Power outside the country which has created this situation and that Power cannot escape responsibility. Our people could not be allowed to settle their own differences, but a foreign Power came along to break up this country.' And he concluded with the

hope that the misguided people of the North would see that they were being exploited for political ends and seek to realize the great ideal of Irishmen living together as Irishmen in their own land. . . . A certain licence is allowed to political orators as well as to poets; if it were not so, one might be inclined to wonder not only what advantage accrues to the foreign Power in question through the starting of riots in Belfast, but on what grounds the President bases his assurance that 'left to themselves, citizens of this country would be only too anxious to live in peace and friendship'?

. . . . . .

One of the paradoxes of our modern world is the fact that persons living at a distance from excitements and catastrophes often learn of them more quickly, and in greater detail, than persons living near the spot where they occur. 'I see,' an acquaintance once addressed me in Belfast, 'by the London papers, we've been having quite a lot of shooting over here.' The remark was justified; on *that* day, at any rate, the London accounts of disturbance were more sensational than the local; and disturbance being confined to that district of Belfast which from time to time takes its pleasure in outbreaks of violence, the rest of the town went its customary, orderly way. The affected area seemed quiet enough on the two or three occasions when I entered it, but that, I admit, was by day; the dangerous hours were those when work was over—it was then that police-cars patrolled the streets where trouble was likely to break out. For the time being, open-air meetings were forbidden, and there was some uncertainty as to whether a

Sunday procession by a couple of Orange lodges would also come under the ban. As a matter of fact, this procession was permitted; which, personally, I was glad of, as I had been given a ticket for the service that followed the march through the streets, and it was my only chance of seeing a muster of Orangemen. This particular function was a perfectly orderly proceeding; several hundred men, wearing the broad, collar-like insignia of the Orangeman, walked behind their band to the hall where the religious service was held, and where the platform was occupied by various officials of the lodges concerned, as well as by clergy, Presbyterian and Church of Ireland. We had *God Save the King* and two or three hymns, a few words from one of the lay dignitaries, and, from the clergy, prayers and an appropriately Protestant sermon. A sober and respectable gathering; bearing out, as far as I could judge, the assurance I had received, from other than members, that the Orange order was a sober and respectable institution, with its strongly religious side. True, the minister who addressed us told a story of the difficulties of an Orangeman, formerly of Belfast, who was living in Catholic surroundings in Canada—the antagonism with which he had to contend; but most of his sermon could have been delivered in other surroundings, to an ordinary Sunday congregation. He was strongly Sabbatarian in his views, warned the young men in his audience—and his audience was largely composed of young men—against neglect of Sunday observance; bade them take example by Catholic attendance at Mass. He denounced the idea that Sunday amusement must be provided for the benefit of tourists from less God-fearing regions—

whose presence he evidently looked on as a doubtful advantage. . . .

The political brotherhood, or association, appears to be a native product of Ireland; growing there as naturally as the shamrock grows and spreading from the region of the Celtic Irishman to that of the Ulster Plantation. 'Whiteboys,' 'Peep o' Day Boys,' 'Defenders,' 'Invincibles,' 'United Irishmen'—all fruits of the same soil that produces the Williamite Orange! The Orange Order, as an institution, may or may not be of value to the Northern State; on that point I express no opinion. But even if its existence be considered, on the whole, undesirable, it must be far less undesirable than that of many other Irish political associations, by reason of its lack of the 'secret society' element.[1] Its proceedings are open and above board and the lodges take their orders from officials known and responsible. If it perpetuates far-off memories that were better forgotten, its justification is that such perpetuation of old memories is not peculiar to the Orange Order; it is general throughout Ireland, North and South, general and perhaps inevitable. And if it is apt to confound religion with politics, that again is general and perhaps inevitable in Ireland.

It must be added that the defiantly triumphant procession is not peculiar to the Northern State; like the political brotherhood, it appears to be an Irish institution. Belfast, on the Twelfth of July, turns out with its drums and its banners; Dublin, at Easter, turns out in the same fashion, in celebration of the rising of 1916 and the memory of the Post Office martyrs—and adopting

[1] See Note. *Irish Secret Societies.*

Belfast Telegraph

YOUNG ORANGEMEN: 'SONS OF WILLIAM'

B Stansfield

THE TWELFTH OF JULY: ORANGE PARADE IN ENNISKILLEN

the Easter Lily as a badge, in contradistinction to the Orange Lily of the North. If report do not lie, the Easter ceremony is not one that an Englishman can take pleasure in witnessing. A well-known Irish Catholic has described it as 'the horrible mixture of rosaries and revolvers . . . the frenzy of hatred which, like a blast from a furnace, goes up every Easter Sunday from the grave-sides of the dead.' [1] This may be a somewhat vehement description; but certain it is, restraint is not always exercised. However, as I have noted in an earlier chapter, the Irishman, even when most fiercely republican, is amiable enough to the individual Englishman, so it may be that this Easter frenzy acts as a safety-valve —a blowing-off of anti-British poison gas! . . . It is, by the way, a curious comment on Mr. de Valera's assurance that Irishmen, left to themselves, 'would be only too anxious to live in peace and friendship,' that there have been rival Easter processions in the Irish capital. The full-blooded Republican of the I.R.A. refuses to admit that due honour can be paid to Padraig Pearse and his fellow-patriots by a president who refuses to break, for good and all, with the British tyranny, and claim her full nationhood for Ireland. Nor is Easter the only patriotic anniversary which reveals a lack of peace and friendship amongst varieties of Nationalist Irishmen; in June 1935, at any rate, there was the same division of forces over the grave of Wolfe Tone, the hero of 1798.[2] Theobald Wolfe Tone, the promoter of abortive French invasion, who escaped the hangman by suicide in prison, lies buried in the churchyard of

[1] *Could Ireland become Communist?* James Hogan.

[2] See Note. *Wolfe Tone.*

Bodenstown, in County Kildare, which nowadays is a place of patriotic pilgrimage; and at Bodenstown, in June 1935, there was a double ceremony in his honour. On the first occasion, the official occasion, there was a military parade and a minister, Mr. Aiken, took the salute and made the necessary oration; the second, a week later, was organized by the I.R.A.—again in the character of legitimate followers of one who had taken arms for an Irish Republic and died for the Republican cause. In the 'Left Wing' Press was much previous advertisement of this, the genuine, tribute to the national hero; special railway arrangements were made for the pilgrimage and contingents brought from all over Ireland, from Ulster as well as from the Free State. Says the *Irish Times* of June 24:

'What is claimed by the organizers to have been the largest Republican pilgrimage to Wolfe Tone's grave in Bodenstown Churchyard took place yesterday. The proceedings were marred to some extent by a clash between Republicans and members of the Republican Congress and other parties.

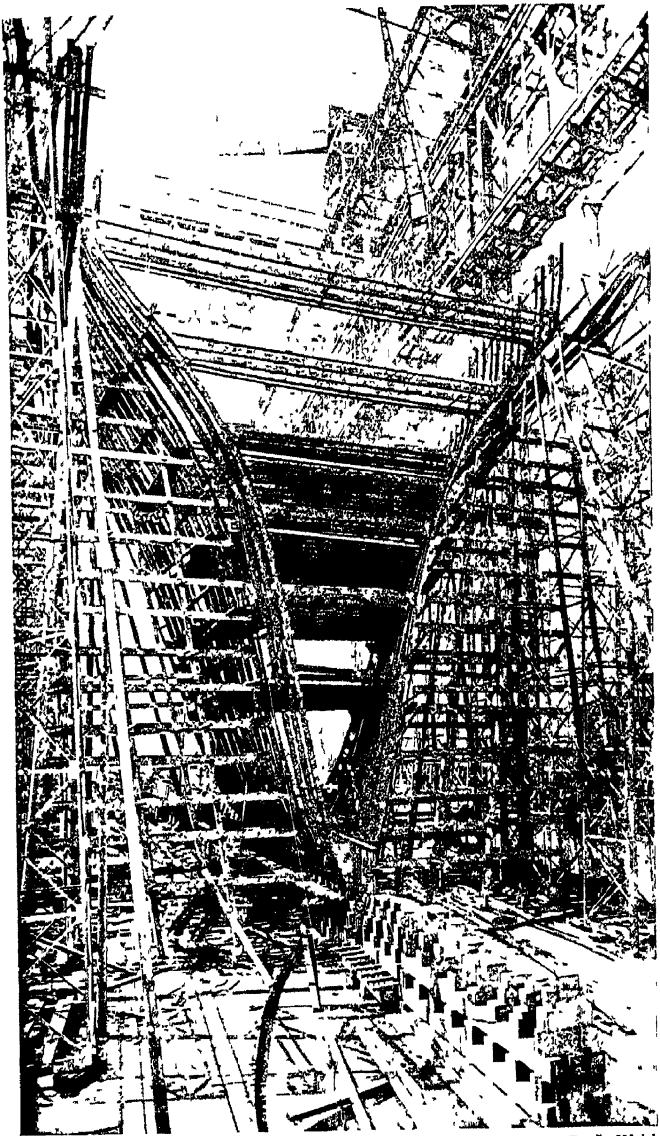
'Thousands of members of the I.R.A. had gathered in the assembly field near Sallins station in preparation for the procession to the graveyard, when about two hundred members of the Republican Congress, Communist Party of Ireland, and the Irish Unemployed Workers' Movement, headed by the band of the Workers' Union of Ireland, marched into the field.

'It was stated that these organizations had been warned that they could not carry banners in the procession, but as they entered the main field they carried several banners. Members of the I.R.A. attempted to take the banners

from them and fighting took place. Posts which had been used to mark the field in sections were taken from the ground, broken, and used as weapons. The Republican Congress flag was torn. Later two men were treated at Naas County Hospital.

'A new flag was procured and the two hundred marchers succeeded in breaking into the field and forming up with the main body. When the procession began, they marched with it a few hundred yards outside Sallins and then stopped. A meeting was then held and a protest made against the "attack" which had been made on them'—the principal speaker being Mr. Peadar O'Donnell, the foremost apostle of Irish Communism. However, while the Communist section of the pilgrimage was protesting against the conduct of the I.R.A., the I.R.A., on its side, was protesting with vigour against the conduct of the Free State Government—its refusal, while professing Nationalist sentiment, to break the British connection. Mr. Sean McBride, in the course of his trouncing, remarked that 'a week ago some of the leaders of the Free State Government came to Tone's grave, and their spokesman had talked about unity. If the unity referred to was based on the acceptance of the treaty, or if it was to be based on some form of association with England and the maintenance of the connection, he declared on behalf of those present that no unity can be achieved on such a basis.' And the speaker went on to express his indignation at the 'gratuitous promise' that had recently been made, that Ireland would not allow her territory to be used, in time of war, for attack upon England. He seems to have been as indignant about it as the speakers at my

open-air meeting in Dublin; nothing, he declared, could be more at variance with Wolfe Tone's policy and life. . . . The differences of Irishmen have never been easy to compose, and to all appearance there is plenty of scope for the peacemaker in the Free State itself, without adding the religious-political dissensions of the North.



R. J Welch

BELFAST. THE WORLD'S LARGEST SHIPYARD

XIII. CONCERNING THE 'BLACK NORTH'

THE Free State quarters its Parliament — which the passing of the Senate is reducing to a single-chamber Dail—in Leinster House, Dublin; which was built in the forties of the eighteenth century as a town mansion for the magnificent Fitzgeralds of Leinster. Seventy years later, in the early nineteenth century, the then duke disposed of his property to the Royal Dublin Society; which, in its turn, disposed of it to the nation when the Free State had come into being. The building which housed the elder Irish Parliament that died at the Union—the Parliament of Grattan and Charlemont and Flood—is now the Bank of Ireland; a stately classic building, fronting College Green, which still contains the old chamber of the Irish Lords, though the other chamber of the Commons has vanished with the need for alterations.

Unlike its neighbour, the State of Northern Ireland had no suitable building ready to its hand, wherein to house its new Parliament; which was forced accordingly, through its early years, to put up with makeshift accommodation. Its opening, and purely formal, session was held in the City Hall of Belfast, in the June of 1921; but it settled down to its parliamentary business in the Presbyterian Assembly's College, also in Belfast, where it remained for the following eleven years, until the Stormont estate had been laid out and the Stormont buildings raised. From the aesthetic point of view, this

lack of immediate housing was a gain, since the city itself could hardly have found space for a building of Stormont's size and dignity, or a site with its beauty of outlook. The Parliament House of Northern Ireland stands east of Belfast, on the Newtownards road, some five miles from the centre of the city; it is a classical building and, placed on a height, it overlooks a wide stretch of country. The main approach is a broad processional road which, in years to come, will be an avenue of lime trees; where it joins a second approach it forms a 'circus' round the Merrifield statue of Carson, impressive in itself and most rightly placed, since to Carson, more than any other man, this Parliament of the State of Northern Ireland owes its existence and its meaning. The statue (its photograph faces page 199) is of bronze on a plinth of Irish granite, the figure itself being twelve feet in height. Unlike most statues, it was erected in the lifetime of the man it was designed to honour; erected by public subscription, in recognition of Carson's services to Ulster.

It was in 1920 that the State of Northern Ireland was endowed with its own Parliament and its own executive Government. These are (says the official Ulster Year Book) of a federal type; which means that certain limits are placed on fiscal independence as well as on power to legislate. Outside these limits, legislative power is vested in the Parliament which sits not at Stormont but at Westminster; hence the interests of Northern Ireland in imperial matters are still represented at Westminster by thirteen members. (Thirteen, that is to say, when they all take their seats. At the last election, of 1935, two Nationalist members, having

headed their respective polls in Tyrone and Fermanagh, announced their intention of staying where they were and so depriving their constituents of representation at Westminster. The said deprivation, of course, being a patriotic protest against the British connection.) The defence forces and the making of peace or war; foreign trade, foreign policy, and the making of treaties—these are matters reserved for decision by the Imperial Government; while certain public services (such as the postal) and taxes (such as income-tax) are administered and collected under the control of United Kingdom authorities. Wisely, no doubt, the Ulster Parliament is prohibited from the passing of measures which might interfere with religious equality, such as laws which make any discrimination with respect to State aid for schools of the different denominations. Like the Parliament that sits at Westminster, that of Northern Ireland consists of two Houses, whereof the Upper is a Senate, of twenty-six members. Two of the senators hold their dignity by right of municipal office—as Lord Mayor of Belfast and Mayor of Londonderry; the other twenty-four are elected by members of the House of Commons, their term of office being for eight years, independently of the life of Parliament, and one half of their number retiring at the end of each fourth year. The senators are entitled to no salary, but may receive an allowance for travelling and incidental expenses which must not exceed eighty guineas in any one year. The House of Commons is double the size of the Senate; it has fifty-two members elected on an adult suffrage basis. Unless he is in receipt of an official salary, the Ulster M.P. is entitled to £200 a year; this, however,

is not, strictly speaking, a salary, but a payment in respect of his expenses. The Dublin Parliament does its best to differ from its British prototype, but procedure in the Ulster House of Commons is modelled on that which obtains in Westminster and, as at Westminster, its presiding genius is a Speaker. The life of a Parliament sitting at Stormont must not exceed five years and a session must be held at least once in every year. For the rest, the King's representative in the State of Northern Ireland is a Governor who, in the name of the Sovereign, summons and dissolves Parliament and gives the Royal Assent to measures that have passed both its Houses.

. . . . . .

The Free State, by the treaty, was granted Dominion status, with which it is by no means content. Northern Ireland, on the other hand, is still part of the United Kingdom; and that fact to the Nationalist is a lasting grievance, no less real because largely sentimental. In this connection it may be of interest to state a point of view which is neither that of the loyal Ulsterman, nor that of the Republican extremist; the author (who has given me permission to quote from his pamphlet[1]) is a Free State citizen who speaks with authority on matters of Irish politics. 'Northern Ireland,' he writes, 'occupies a separate, peculiar, and privileged position. . . . It is neither nation, province, nor state. Notwithstanding an appearance of autonomy, it is really a mere political satellite of Great Britain. Its taxes are collected by

[1] *Ireland and the Commonwealth.* A reprint, published by Macmillan, from the *Round Table* of December 1934.

British officials, its judges are paid by the Treasury, a new valuation for purposes of taxation is at present being carried out by British valuers, it is garrisoned by British troops. . . .

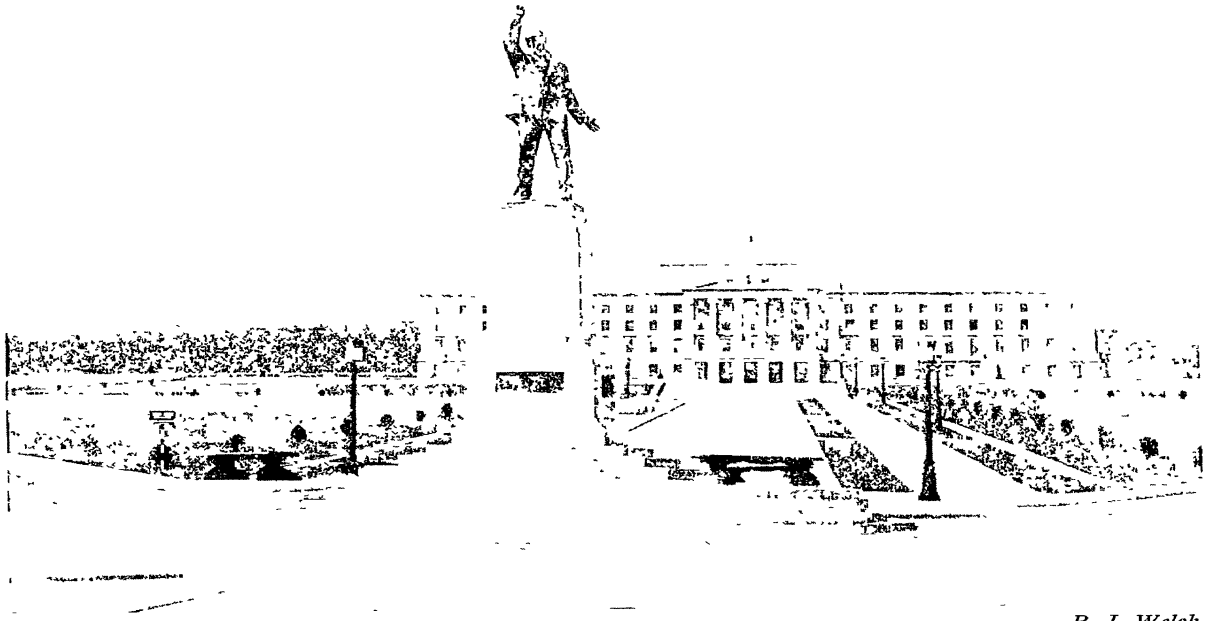
'There can be little doubt that the setting up and maintenance of this separate, externally controlled administration for a portion of Ireland, in spite of the desires of at least one-third of the community involved, has been, and remains, the principal cause of the failure of the Irish Treaty. At present Northern Ireland gets the best of both sides of the bargain. It has its own Parliament and administrative machinery, but they are heavily subsidized by Great Britain. This arrangement is obviously unfair to the Free State. One has only to picture what would have happened in South Africa if Great Britain had given similar privileged treatment to the English colony of Natal. Under such conditions is it not clear that the Union of South Africa would never have taken place? . . . Is it not clear also that in an Irish Parliament containing representatives of all Ulster Mr. de Valera's party would never have obtained a majority? Partition has cut off not only north-east Ulster from the Free State, but Ireland from the Commonwealth.'

From this the writer argues that 'a necessary step in the re-establishment of satisfactory relations between Great Britain and Ireland is for the British Government to place Northern Ireland in the same political position as the Free State. . . . It involves the conferring of Dominion status on Northern Ireland, but does not mean either the abandonment or the coercion of Ulster. It should be coupled with a declaration that Great Britain

will not permit, and will, if necessary, resist by force of arms, any attempt by the Irish Free State to interfere with or coerce Northern Ireland. In any event Mr. de Valera has repeatedly declared that his Government has no intention of using force to bring the Six Counties of Northern Ireland into a United Ireland. . . . On this matter every responsible Irish Free State politician is agreed.'

If Dominion status were conferred upon Ulster: and if, at the same time, the right of the Free State to secede, if it would, from the British Commonwealth were expressly recognized by the British Government: then (so the author of the pamphlet believes) it would be possible for the two Irish States to negotiate 'a new settlement of their future relations. Negotiations for a settlement of this kind, entered into between Irishmen alone, with the certain knowledge that Great Britain admitted the complete autonomy of Ireland, North and South, and would not interfere with any settlement arrived at, would not be likely to break down upon nice theoretical points. In such negotiations Mr. de Valera, or whoever were to represent the Free State, could make concessions to secure the unity of Ireland, which would be impossible in dealing with the British Government.' . . .

The point of view is interesting as that of a moderate man desirous of his country's unity and personally desirous that Ireland should remain within the Empire; but at present, at any rate, it is unlikely to appeal to the majority of Ulster citizens. And one wonders . . . would the mere conferring of Dominion status on one part of the island act as a charm, dispelling old



R. J. Welch

STORMONT: HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT AND CARSON STATUE

antagonisms, racial and religious, and instilling a readiness, an un-Irish readiness, to compromise?

. . . . . .

A very small state, this of Northern Ireland, which yet has its own identity. As regards its area, less in extent than Yorkshire; as regards its population, not a quarter that of Greater London. But I sometimes wonder whether there is not a delusion of size which afflicts communities; and whether those whose fellow-nationals—or internationals—are numbered by millions and scores of millions, and whose interests are spread over wide expanses of the earth's surface—I sometimes wonder whether, by this very fact of size and numbers, they have not lost something that the citizen of the smaller state retains? An interest in your own place that is keen and personal and intimate . . . after all, if you spread your interests wide, you must also spread them thin! While it stands to reason that the opinion and voice of the individual citizen count for more in a community of a few hundred thousand than in a nation that swarms like ants. The day of small things in communities is not to be despised; we owe much of our heritage of architectural beauty to the dwellers in small states and independent cities, to the pride and the pleasure they took in their adorning. The churches and cathedrals that the Middle Ages have left us were often raised to the honour of cities, as well as to the glory of God; and in matters intellectual the rule seems to be that the outsize herd of human beings does not so readily produce the first-class brain as the state that is limited in numbers. It may be that Ulster's predominance

in the matter of good brains (to which allusion has already been made) is to be accounted for, to a certain extent, by the fact that the planter-race of Ulster was a race apart. A community of limited numbers which, for several generations, lived adventurously; on guard for its rights and liberties and sometimes on guard for its life.

. . . . . .

In a document of Free State authorship which touched on the Nationalist grievance of Ireland's partition, I read that the Six Counties, 'still partially administered from London . . . contain some of the most historic places in Ireland.' Among these sites of historic interest is the burial-place of Brian Boru, the conqueror of the Danes, and that of the Ulster O'Neills and O'Donnells, the doughtiest opponents of England; while Cave Hill, Belfast, is sacred to Irish Republicans since there it was that Theobald Wolfe Tone and his United Irishmen initiated the first movement for the establishment of an Irish Republic. And, more important still to the Irish devout, the land of St. Patrick is in Ulster.

St. Patrick is the patron saint of all Ireland; but fate has so willed it that the region most intimately associated with his name—the region of his landing, of his serfdom, and his death—is enclosed within the Ulster border. Slemish Mountain, where he herded cattle in his day of captivity and where first the love of God was kindled in his heart—Slemish Mountain, near Lough Neagh, is in County Antrim. Strangford Lough, on whose shores he landed when he came on his Christianizing mission, is an inlet on the Ulster coast; his landing-place was

aul, where he built his first church and founded a nonastery and where, when his work of apostleship vas over, he rendered up his soul to God. Near by is he ancient town of Downpatrick where (according to egend, somewhat dubious legend) his body lies buried n the precincts of a Protestant cathedral. Like his rave in Downpatrick, his birthplace is none too certain; y origin he was a Romanized Briton but his native iver may have been Severn or may have been Clyde—he learned hold varying opinions on the subject. But vherever the Bannaventa Berniae where he dwelt in his outh, he left it as a lad and left it by force; carried off o captivity by Irish raiders (the predecessors of the Viking pirates), and for six years dwelt in Irish bondage. From this cattle-herding bondage he eventually escaped n a trading-ship bound for France; and in France he ived for fourteen years as a disciple of St. Germain of Auxerre. Then in a vision he heard the pagan Irish all him; and with the blessing of the Pope on himself nd his mission, he set out to answer their call. It was n the year 432 that he began his work of converting reland to the Faith, and in the year 1932 the fifteen undredth anniversary of his landing was celebrated by he Irish churches—in stone as well as in ceremony. The Protestant Church of Ireland has already honoured he memory of the saint by a chapel erected at Saul; he monument chosen by Catholic Ireland is a colossal tatue of Patrick in granite—the work of Francis Doyle-ones, an Anglo-Irish sculptor. The memorial is to be nveiled in the course of the present year (1936); its ite is the crown of Slieve Patrick, the highest of a roup of low hills in County Down, whence the statue

will look down on Strangford Lough and the scenes that Patrick knew in life. The granite from which it is carved is dug from quarries in the neighbouring hills; with its pedestal the statue stands thirty-five feet high and should be visible, in clear weather, for something like fifty miles around. On the slope of the hill a platform has been levelled for a Mass rock altar, and there, once a year, in honour of St. Patrick, Mass will be celebrated in the open. Ten thousand people, it is estimated, can kneel on the surrounding slope.

To be noted, by the by, that though the Ulster State has gone outside her own borders when she needed sculptors, she has no need to do so in the matter of painters. In the Belfast Art Gallery—which, to the discerning, will give more pleasure than many galleries of greater pretension—Lavery, as a native of the city, is given a special place of honour; while the work of a younger painter, William Conor, is proof, if proof were needed, that the life and work of an industrial city can be inspiration to the artist.

. . . . . .

In spite of the political-religious clashes that take place, from time to time, in the meaner streets of Belfast—in spite of the perennial antagonism between loyalist and nationalist, Catholic and Protestant—and the rumours of oppression by the dominant majority, the average nationalist citizen of Ulster seems content to stay where he is. It is certain, at any rate, that when he is a farmer—and the peasant-farmer is numerous in Ulster—he has no desire to migrate to Saorstát Eireann. On one occasion [1] a direct offer to assist such migration

[1] December 6, 1934.

Ulster Tourist Development Association, Ltd.

THE VALE OF GLENARIFF, CO. ANTRIM

R. J Welch

SLEMISH MOUNTAIN, BALLYMENA

was made, in the Northern Parliament, by the Minister for Home Affairs; a Nationalist member of the House was informed that if he would furnish the minister 'with the names of any members of that section of the community which he represents who are anxious to emigrate to the Free State, the Government of Northern Ireland will willingly assist in every way in its power to arrange an exchange of holdings with loyalists of Donegal who may wish for a transfer to Northern Ireland. In view of the speeches of the hon. member and his parliamentary colleagues, I fully anticipate that the number of his friends desirous of entering the jurisdiction of the Free State will be amply sufficient to make room not only for the loyalists of Donegal, but for others in the South who would like once more to reside under the sheltering folds of the Union Jack.'

If the minister genuinely anticipated this response to his offer, the actual result must have been a disappointment. Commenting on the offer, a few weeks later, the Belfast *News-Letter* announced that there had been 'a remarkable sequel . . . shoals of letters have been received from Protestants in various parts of the Free State asking that facilities should be granted for their removal to and reception in Ulster, and pleading for financial assistance for their transfer. These letters continue to pour in. But if, to obtain their transfer, Southern loyalists are depending on an exodus of Ulster's "downtrodden minority" to the Irish Free State, they are, I am afraid, doomed to disappointment. Not only have there been no applications by Nationalists for an exchange and transfer to Free State territory, but extensive inquiries have failed to reveal even the slightest

inclination on their part to cross the border. A member of the Unionist Council whose job it is to investigate the matter told me that he was unable to trace one person who desired to leave the imperial province.' . . .

The writer in the *News-Letter* goes on to say that, in this matter of exchange of holdings, the Ulster Government can, of course, do nothing except by mutual consent, which apparently, in the case of the Catholic Ulsterman, is lacking.

XIV. THE NEW CLEAVAGE

IN Dublin, one day, I had an interview with an Irishwoman well known as a staunch Republican; she had been good enough to give me an hour of her time for the purpose of expounding Republican aims and principles. She began with her party's views on imperialism and the British Crown but, that prelude over, the argument took another turn and there slipped into it phrases familiar in another connection—phrases anent 'capitalism' and 'the workers.'

'Wait a minute,' I said. 'Wait a minute. You 're not talking Irish Republicanism—you 're talking ordinary Socialism!'

The accusation was admitted, with a twinkle. 'Of course it is, but we mustn't call it Socialism, for fear of frightening the Church. Socialism in Ireland means anti-religion, so we 've got to be careful how we talk about it.'

That admission, made by one who in England might be dubbed a Left Winger, shed light on a fact I had not failed to note: that on every railway bookstall in the Irish Free State there was displayed a pamphlet, by Professor James Hogan, entitled *Could Ireland become Communist?*—a pamphlet dealing with 'the development and identification of the Communist movement as manifested in Ireland during the past seven years.' And whether or no the anxiety expressed in his pages is well founded, Professor Hogan speaks for more than himself. A problem that nowadays is troubling a good

many Irishmen is, how far the Republican movement in Ireland is identified with the urge towards Communism.

At first thought it is difficult, extraordinarily difficult, to connect a race on whom the faith of their fathers has so strong a hold with a system which, so far, has insisted on deposing God from His heaven. But when I voiced that objection to an Irishman who confessed to a fear of rising Communism, the answer came that there was the same apparent obstacle, of religious faith, in the Russia of Nicholas II. In a world that the middle-aged can clearly remember, the devoutness of the Russian peasant was proverbial; yet when once the Tsardom had been overthrown, it took only a few years, a very few years, for triumphant revolution to bring to a successful issue the task that international Communism enjoins on its members of 'systematically and unswervingly combating religion.' The believing, unorganized millions of the peasantry were no match for the organized God-haters who imposed their will from the towns. . . . Some such reflection, it may be, has prompted the warnings against irreligious propaganda which ecclesiastical authority in Ireland has of late thought it needful to issue.

A recent incident which gave rise to uneasiness in the ranks of Catholicism was a meeting in one of the towns of Southern Ireland which the local bishop considered inadvisable for a Catholic audience. Accordingly he warned his flock against attendance and the warning was duly passed on by the priests of his diocesan churches—but, all the same, the meeting was crowded, its audience running into thousands. A good (but fiercely political) Catholic whom I once heard discussing

the subject declared roundly that bishops should mind their own business of the Church: their province was the spiritual direction of their flocks, not interference with politics!

The Irish priesthood, admittedly, has been a factor, and a powerful factor, in its country's politics; at the same time it would be a mistake to conclude that the Irish Catholic has always followed, without question, the political guidance of his Church. Parnell had his minority who held to him faithfully, even when the Catholic hierarchy cried shame on his sin and condemned him as unfit for leadership; and, more significant yet, the Papal Rescript of 1888, in which Leo XIII published his disapproval of methods employed in the 'Plan of Campaign' and denounced the practice of boycotting as immoral and incompatible with the laws of Christian charity—that Papal Rescript was not (as the British Government had hoped) accepted without question by the body of Catholic Nationalists. In the past, however (and this should be noted), the clash was merely between Nationalist politics and priestly authority in secular matters; there was no question of irreligious influence or antagonism to the Church as a Church. While to-day there can be little doubt that those who hold the Communistic faith are endeavouring to spread it in Ireland, more especially in the ranks of the Irish Republican Army. As to the measure of their success—that is the disturbing problem. 'The conspiratorial tradition,' says Professor Hogan, 'has always been strong in Ireland, but quite apart from any such tendencies of ours, it is a recognized principle of Communistic activity that, until Communism has

attained the proportions of a mass movement, it must rely to a large extent on conspiratorial methods.'

It is unlikely that even the most pessimistic of citizens anticipates any immediate danger to the Churches, any open raising of the anti-Christian standard in Ireland; what seems to be feared is the gradual spreading of political Communism, disguising itself in the first place under various titles—anti-Fascism and so on—and allying itself with other forms of discontent and rebellion. Political Communism, if it gained the upper hand, would inevitably reveal itself, if not as an open enemy of the Church, as an anti-clerical influence. That, it may be, is a possibility of the future; but for the present even convinced admirers of Soviet Russia will usually esteem it prudent to keep their anti-clerical opinions in the background until they are sure of their surroundings —as witness my Republican friend! Even in England it is advisable for those who speak in praise of the U.S.S.R. to slur its atheistic policy and teaching, and such slurring, in Ireland, is not merely advisable but essential. When the members of a society entitled Friends of Soviet Russia returned to Ireland, after a few weeks' visit to the region they befriended, some among them, judging by their public utterances, thought it necessary to reassure those who were distrustful of the Soviet cult of godlessness; hence they told their countrymen that they had seen no signs of religious persecution and that, if churches and organized religion in general did not enter into the Soviet scheme of government, yet that Soviet Government, for the first time on earth, was putting Christianity into practice. 'The spirit of Russia is a religious one—very distinctly religion and

Christianity is not preached there but most certainly it is practised.' So one of the returning delegates reported, and her report was not peculiar to herself. Catholicism, with its stress on the sacraments, is unlikely to accept this definition of religious practice; and it is, one imagines, propaganda of this kind which is stirring the Church to uneasiness.

For the present, then, the Irish Communist, whatever his personal opinion of churches and religions, makes no open move against them; the Irish proletarian and the Irish peasant can be induced to listen, and listen approvingly, to projects for an All-Ireland Workers' Party, or a Workers' and Small Farmers' Republic; but it is still—and long will be—a dangerous matter to run counter to the religious convictions of Irish proletarians and peasants. There was example of that danger in the spring of 1933 when, for some reason or another, Communist propaganda in Dublin became suspect by the Catholic crowd—which thereupon set to work to break up meetings and finally, in a fit of righteous indignation, wrecked the Left-Wing headquarters at Connolly House and the 'Workers' College' in Eccles Street, where speakers were trained for the Cause!

Here it should be noted that Ireland has produced, for her own consumption, a peculiar brand of Socialism and Communism; unlike their equivalent in other regions of the globe, these Irish brands are not international in character—on the contrary, they are often strongly tinged with nationalism. The Irish Republican Army came into existence as a Nationalist, an anti-British movement, and that, fundamentally, is what it still is; aiming at complete independence for Saorstát Eireann, the

breaking of all links with the British Empire; and inspired by the old ideal of 'Ireland a nation once again!' But certain it is—and likewise incongruous!—that on more than one occasion representatives and leaders of this patriotic body have proclaimed their faith in doctrines and principles which are usually professed by adherents of the international faith. There was, for instance, a formula adopted at one of its conventions which ran as follows: 'We believe that the reorganization of Irish life demands the public ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange.' And this formula was not only passed by the convention; during the Easter Week commemorations it was read throughout the country at all the I.R.A. parades. Professor Hogan has a comment on this Irish intermingling of opposites. 'There are,' he writes, 'only two vital points in which Communism of the I.R.A. variety differs from the orthodox Marxian Communism. So far none of the I.R.A. leaders have declared themselves either atheists or internationalists. They have envisaged Communism in national rather than in international terms. However, the latter point of difference is not such a sharp deviation as might be supposed. It is in keeping with the most recent Russian interpretation of Marxism, which asserts not only the possibility but the desirability of building up a Socialist structure within the framework of the isolated national state, such a series of national social revolutions to build up in turn the world revolution.' Revolutionary Socialism, he notes elsewhere, can best approach its goal by way of revolutionary Republicanism; hence 'the ideas of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin are tacked on to the names of Wolfe

Tone, Connolly, and Mellows and passed across to Republicans as the quintessence of patriotism.' . . . An odd conjunction—Marx as an aid to patriotism! The Communist standard advancing to the *Soldier's Song*, instead of to the *Internationale*!

It is obvious, however, that orthodox Republicanism, of the national variety, is not unmindful of the dangers of Marxist permeation; witness the Bodenstown incident described in Chapter XII, when the main body of the I.R.A. came to blows with a Republican Congress contingent. The Republican Congress movement preaches revolutionary Socialism; the overthrow of existing economic and political machinery and the establishment of a Workers' Republic, a programme with which the leaders of the 'orthodox' I.R.A. felt it undesirable to ally themselves too closely. That, no doubt, was their reason for prohibiting the display of Republican Congress banners and for employing what one of the Congress orators termed 'Hitlerite' tactics when the prohibition was defied. ('Hitlerite' and 'Fascist' and 'imperialist' seem to be employed in Ireland, as they often are in England, as vague terms of political abuse.)

. . . . . .

So far as can be judged by the passing stranger, the overthrow of existing economic and political machinery is not a present Irish danger; but we live in an epoch of swift and drastic change when no wise man will be definite in his forecasts of the future. Who shall say what will happen ten years ahead? or even five? On the Dublin memorial to Charles Stewart Parnell it is written that no man may set bounds to the march of a nation;

it would be equally true—perhaps it would be truer—to say that no man may set bounds to the march of a revolution. The tendency of revolution is always to extremes; Kerensky is ousted by Lenin, the Girondin goes down before the Jacobin. And this invariable urge towards extremism is comprehensible enough. All revolutions begin with a burst of enthusiasm, a belief that the gates of some political Utopia are flung wide; and on that enthusiasm, that impossible dream, there follows inevitable reaction. Utopia, seen nearer, is bound to prove somewhat disappointing; the new system causes hardship by its awkward working; the plenty and content we were promised by our leaders have receded to a distance, receded unaccountably, and we follow them further and yet further. Since revolutions are always in a hurry and creation is a slow process, the one gratification that lies ready to hand is the destruction of men and institutions—a very real gratification to persons sufficiently excited. If and when an extreme Nationalist element forces the hand of Mr. de Valera and so attains its desire, the declaration of an Irish Republic, the political impetus given may not be easy to check. Where the extremist of to-day demands a Republic, in defiance of Great Britain, the extremist of to-morrow may demand a Workers' Republic, on the lines laid down by Soviet Russia.

One conditional prophecy can here be ventured on. If the day ever dawns when some form of 'authoritative' power, Marxian or otherwise, possesses itself, at a stroke, of the machinery of Irish government, the leader or leaders who have mastered the nation will have cause to be grateful to Mr. de Valera for his removal of so

many constitutional obstacles to their sudden seizure of power. Almost the last of these obstacles is the Senate, which seems, as I write, to be doomed; having been offered the choice of abolishing itself or being abolished by Mr. de Valera and his tame Governor-General. And with its disappearance it is at least possible that a majority of one in a single-chamber Parliament might install a revolutionary government—dictator or junta—and substitute authority for law; if only by the ease with which it can be induced to commit *hari-kari*, the single-chamber Parliament is a temptation to aspiring despotism. The powers which Mr. de Valera is gathering into his own hands may not always stay there; and the same absence of constitutional safeguards, which enables him to carry out his policy unhindered, may, in time to come, advantage a successor whose aims and opinions are not his.

The average Englishman nowadays pays little attention to Free State politics; he ignores them of set purpose, having made up his mind that the Irishman is best left alone. As a general rule he is wise in this refusal of interest; but if the leftward trend in Ireland gathers strength, it may not be possible to continue in indifference—his attention may be called and held. In the *Daily Telegraph* of January 16, 1936, Mr. Hugh Law had an unpleasantly significant article in which he pointed out that the fall of constitutional government in the Free State would have its repercussions elsewhere; further, he believes that such a fall is by no means unlikely. 'There are,' he writes, 'forces stirring in Ireland not far below the surface, which, before many years are past, may cause Mr. de Valera himself to be

looked upon as a moderate and constitutionally minded statesman, even as John Redmond and Mr. Cosgrave, once regarded as dangerous, are now regarded. Let these forces get a firmer grip on the Dail (by no means an unlikely event) and Great Britain might find herself faced overnight by the accomplished fact of a Soviet Republic, lawfully established by Act of a Dominion Parliament upon the Ulster border and within two hours' steaming of Holyhead.' . . . As to whether Mr. Law's forebodings are justified, I know too little of Irish internal politics to express any definite opinion; but this I am sure of, they are not peculiar to himself. And if the future should prove them just, it may safely be prophesied that a mixture of Communism and Irish Nationalism will have its explosive properties!

Against these forces that stir beneath the surface and threaten fresh 'Troubles' the surest defence is the Church; Ireland, whether Protestant or Catholic, holds to its religion; by one and the other atheism is regarded with horror. Republican Nationalism may be induced to ally itself with Communism; but even if Communism refrains from anti-religious propaganda, the Catholic Church will never sanction a system that installs the worship of the State, its hereditary enemy. It may be true, as the pessimist avers, that the Orthodox Church, five-and-twenty years ago, had as strong a hold on the Russian majority as the Roman Catholic Church of to-day has on the mass of the Irish population; but if the hold of the Orthodox Church was as strong, it does not seem to have been as careful or intelligent.

One weakness there is in the position of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland; one weakness, that is to

say, when the Church is considered as defence against Communist assault. It is rich, and obviously rich—the signs of its wealth are apparent. It builds churches and again churches and has money for its new cathedrals. In Mullingar, a somewhat depressing little county capital, there is rising a cathedral which will dominate the town, to its aesthetic advantage, but which, by the time it is finished, will have cost a pretty penny to build. A local worthy with whom I discussed it assured me that in Mullingar itself £20,000 towards its building had been raised in the course of a week; as my guide-book gave the population of the town as 5,300, I frankly didn't believe him, suspecting that he desired to impress the stranger by an exaggerated estimate of Mullingar's piety, wealth, and generosity. Less interested persons, however, to whom I quoted his figures later on seemed to think them by no means impossible—the Church being skilled in extraction of money from the pockets of the faithful. All I can say is that, if Mullingar did produce that £20,000—nearly £4 per head of the population—it must be considerably more prosperous than it looks. A cathedral of recent erection is that of Cobh, an imposing Gothic building with a spire three hundred feet high; while another is shortly to start building in Dublin, where the Protestant Church of Ireland refuses to resign either of her two cathedrals into Catholic possession.[1] (She may have her excellent reasons for refusal, but to the uninitiated they do not seem altogether

[1] Christ Church, the older foundation, is the cathedral church of the two sees of Dublin and Glendalough; St. Patrick's (where Swift and his Stella lie buried) is the national cathedral of the Protestant Church of Ireland.

adequate.) The site for the Catholic cathedral-to-be is the green space in Merrion Square.

It is not alone in the building of churches that Catholicism gives evidence of comfortable wealth; a good many of the large country houses that their owners can no longer afford to keep up are adapted to the uses of convents and Catholic schools. Taken all round, the Catholic Church in Ireland suggests prosperity and that, I repeat, is its weakness; always has been its weakness in conflict with the anti-clerical, or strife with revolution. Again and again it has had to pay dearly for the defect in its system, the paradoxical defect, which—in contradistinction to the extreme of self-denial encouraged in the individual—places no limit on the acquisition of collective property and wealth. That tendency to collective accumulation of wealth has always existed in the Catholic Church and always, in the end, roused envy and resentment; witness not only the dissolutions of the Reformation but Statutes of Mortmain and like medieval protests, forerunners of modern anti-clerical laws and confiscations. When revolution is in the air, the possession of wealth is a risk.

In so far as 'Left Wing' doctrine spreads through Ireland, it will mark, and mark strongly, a new line of cleavage—cutting across the traditional frontiers of racial and religious feud. So far there is little outward sign of such a cleavage; but the fact remains that the Church is anxious concerning it—and the priest has his finger on the pulse of the village and the by-street.

XV. CENSORSHIP—THE REALISTIC IRISHMAN—THE END

SCANNING the shelves of a Dublin bookseller's, I perceived, to my astonishment, a volume which, to my certain knowledge, contained a passage dealing, at considerable length, with birth control, and dealing with it frankly from the point of view of the advocate. Since birth control is a topic strictly barred in the press of the Irish Free State, I wondered how it had managed to slip past the Board of Censors and, so soon as occasion offered, I made inquiry into the methods of the Board—on what principle they passed and excluded. When I asked if the birth control prohibition had been rescinded, the answer was, certainly not; the reason why this particular book was being displayed and sold without hindrance was because no one had, as yet, informed on its offending passage.

It is morals, not politics, on which Irish censorship keeps its careful eye; any book that is considered likely to exercise a deleterious effect on the public's morals is banned, and banned without appeal. All the same, the reading public of Dublin—I can't say whether it is the case in the rest of the country—appears to have a fairly extensive acquaintance with publications that have come under the ban; the explanation being that the decision of the Board of Censors is not instant—as it is a Board and not a single person, each volume, presumably, has to go the round. As a rule, some weeks elapse between

the appearance of a book and its official condemnation and, during that interval, the buying and circulating library public (which knows by this time what the censorship objects to) makes a hurried rush for any volume that is likely to go on the index. Booksellers and librarians, I was told, are wise to the practice and, when the fate of a popular novel is in doubt, send orders to their publishers with promptitude.

Censorship is never an encouraging influence on literature and the Irish variety can be no exception to the rule; it is fortunate, therefore, for the Irish author who desires to touch on forbidden topics, such as birth control, that there is a market for his wares outside his native country, a market, moreover, that is considerably wider and more lucrative. One class of Irishman, at any rate, can feel little regret for the dying out of Gaelic as the national tongue and the predominance of interloping English. The greater number of Irish authors, if they did not think and write in interloping English, would be hard put to it to earn their daily bread. While as for censorship in the Irish Free State, an author who has his comfortable sales in England and America will not be greatly injured, either in respect of his purse or pride, when it puts a black mark against his name.

The author the censorship could damage, and damage irreparably, by banning his work, is the patriotic enthusiast who is endeavouring to keep Gaelic alive as a literary language. His market does not extend to Great Britain and the United States; on the contrary, it is limited not only to Ireland but to a small minority, a very small minority, of the reading public of Ireland.

And if the Board of Censors at any time should refuse to allow him to appeal to that public, he has no other public to appeal to—as a writer he would cease to exist.

It is not only through literature that a careful guidance is given to Free State manners and morals. It must always be remembered that the Catholic Church in Ireland is strongly puritanical, and the influence of this puritanical element is sometimes obvious in the treatment of film-drama. In Limerick, one evening, I turned into a picture-house where they were showing Greta Garbo in her role of Christina of Sweden—or rather in part of that role. For the play had been cut, and cut ruthlessly, in the interests of morality; that part of the story which dealt with the amorous adventures of the Spanish ambassador and Christina, disguised as a boy, had been taken out with one slash; instead we had a caption which gave the brief information that the ambassador discovers that Christina is not a boy, and that their affection then ripens—details of ripening suppressed! . . . Then, in Ireland as everywhere, the younger generation frequents public dancing-halls, and the practice is eyed with suspicion by their spiritual fathers; the application for a dancing-hall licence will often enough bring the local parish priest to object. Our English regulations affecting places of entertainment are often ridiculously fussy and grundyish; but still fussier and more grundyish are the regulations affecting the dance-halls of Ireland. There must be superintendence with regard to sitting out; and according to one of the fussiest regulations, the dancers must all be resident in the neighbourhood of the hall; persons dwelling outside a specified radius must not be admitted

to its gaieties. Presumably the idea is that residents in the district can be identified in cases of undesirable behaviour, whereas strangers can sin and disappear; but whatever its motives, the rule is said to bear hardly on Free State Protestants who, being fewer and more scattered than the Catholic population, often have to drive considerable distances if they are to meet and dance with their friends.

In spite of these careful precautions against temptation by book and temptation by two-step, the morals of the younger generation in Ireland, like the morals of younger generations elsewhere, are said to be somewhat less straitlaced than those of their parents and grandparents. I do not mean to suggest that immorality is widespread, but I have been informed, and by those who should know, that, in certain classes and districts at any rate, there is no longer the horror of unchastity which was a proverbial characteristic of Catholic Ireland and was understood to be one of the beneficent results of priestly authority. If the control of that authority has weakened of late years, it has to be remembered that all the world over, from China to Peru, one of the results of the war was a loosening of moral restraint, and it was not to be expected that Ireland, which had war within her borders, should be wholly exempt from the tendency. I have heard it said also that the younger generation of rural Ireland is not so docile as once it was in the matter of having its marriages arranged for it on business lines, by its parents; nowadays the brides and bridegrooms may like to have a say of their own. All primitive peoples seem to have an unromantic attitude towards marriage, and there are regions in the west where the

Irish peasant still lives in a fashion but little removed from the primitive. When a man draws his living by the sweat of his brow from a patch of soil, he needs a fellow-labourer to wife, and advantage to his property by her work and dowry is a stronger consideration than mere sentiment; hence there is nothing surprising in the Irish matchmaking tradition, the open and commercial arrangement of peasant marriages. And in districts where the tradition still prevails, the coming together of man and maid—which ideally begins with an avowal of love—is likely to be as much of a haggle as the sale of a calf or a sucking-pig.[1]

It is, I gather, the fashion nowadays, at any rate the literary fashion, to insist on the realistic qualities of the Irish race. A Dublin bookseller with whom I made friends—an interesting young man with knowledge of the wares he sold—was the first to rub that into me;

[1] 'Lisdoonvarna is a matchmaking centre. That is to say, an anxious girl goes up there, sometimes with a sleuth-eyed parent, and the bargain is made. . . . Considered romantically, it is a sad, cattle-dealing sort of business. But the truth is that many of these mercenary marriages in Ireland turn out far better than many free-choice ones abroad. There is a cynical explanation that where neither party looks for any romantic satisfaction, neither is disappointed at the absence of it. So the ice-brick and duty-bound attitude to life begins on the wedding-day. And possibly, as a result, you have the prosaic melancholia of the Celt, as we sometimes meet him in Ireland. It will revolt one's fine-sifted feelings to hear of a match broken off because of a row over a ploughshare in the dowry, or of a publican who wants a plump wife because a lean one would look miserable in the bar. . . . But so it is, and matchmaking Lisdoonvarna presents a striking example of the lack of sentiment and amazing realism of the Irish rural mind.'—D. KELLEHER, *Ireland of the Welcomes.*

he was firmly insistent that I must get out of my head the legendary English misconception of the Irishman as either a scapegrace, on the lines of Lever's heroes, or an Abbey Theatre peasant, conversing in the phrase of Synge. Far too much stress had been laid in the literature of the past upon the romantic, poetical characteristics of the Irishman; 'the author who writes of us as we really are will show us as a hard-headed people—very little sentiment about us!' . . . And he, also, instanced the realistic outlook of the peasant.

That bookseller, I surmised, was a product of the new, de Valera order which looks forward to an Ireland largely industrialized, where the factory stands beside the field—and which, if it is to flourish, will have need of business-like sons.

Generalization concerning any nation or people is usually rash, and especially so in dealing with the Irish, who are not one people but many. That Celtic section which lives close to the soil may sometimes enter on matrimony with an absence of the more romantic emotions surprising to the average Englishman; but, after all, this realistic attitude is by no means peculiar to the Celtic peasant—it pays elsewhere to run matrimonial agencies and journals. And the fact that marriage is approached in a huckstering spirit, with an eye to a bargain, is no proof of complete incapacity for the type of emotion that an Englishman usually associates with sexual love. Human passions and desires, when they run feebly in one channel, will probably run with added force in another; and if the Irish Celt is unsentimental when he takes him a wife, he is sentimental and romantic—violently so—in the matter of

his politics and patriotism. Even his announcements of meetings will burst into poetry.

The dead who died for Ireland—the noble ones—the best
Who gave their lives for motherland, who poured upon her breast
For Freedom's cause the blood she gave—who with their dying breath
Sent prayers to God to heal her woes—then sealed their love in death!

That I copied from a tattered and weather-worn poster that I found fluttering on a wall in County Donegal. A few weeks later, in County Cork, I travelled in a third-class carriage, untidily disfigured by numerous remarks in pencil, and when I set about deciphering some of the remarks, I found that they all had political significance. The majority were of the simple 'Heil Hitler!' type. 'Up Tom Barry!' denoted the scribbler's adherence to the I.R.A.—Tom Barry being one of its 'martyrs,' consigned to jail by the present Government. 'Up O'Duffy!' was a Blue Shirt motto which someone of the contrary persuasion had evidently tried to rub out with a dirty finger. But mingled with these rude simplicities were inscriptions of another type. One such, which I copied into my note-book, concerned Michael Collins and was written by one who had honoured him: 'Live first for God then you will live for Ireland. Collins died for Ireland.'

Nor does it seem possible to doubt that the Irish peasant finds satisfaction for his imaginative instincts in many of the ceremonies and observances of his Church; not only in its touches of pageantry but in the duties it enjoins on him, in his intercourse with saints,

his pilgrim journeys to the sacred places of Ireland. In these perhaps he finds more than compensation for the sordidness of his courtship. (Interesting to note that these bargained marriages are enduring and faithful, more so than many marriages arranged in more romantic circumstances. A fact which suggests that material interest is a better guide to matrimonial comfort than the much-lauded impulse of love.)

And it is true, I think, that in Ireland—and not only among those of Catholic peasant strain—one comes across an 'other-worldliness,' an acceptance of the surrounding immaterial, that is rare in more sophisticated regions. A wide variety of 'other-worldliness'; extending from belief in the existence of fairies, and the influence of sacred springs and wells, to the inexplicable volumes which Geraldine Cummins produces by some strange inspiration. Beside the Ireland that my bookseller insisted on—of the hard-headed peasant and progressive industrial—is that other Ireland where the devout go three times round a wishing-well on their knees and hang their bits of rag on the ruin of a near-by chapel. And where jeering unbelievers who once mocked at the crawlers on their pious round were promptly smitten with ill-luck!

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A Frenchwoman, Etiennette Beuque, has recently published a pamphlet entitled *Où va l'Irlande?* which is in part recent history, compiled from the Irish point of view, and in part an enthusiastic appreciation of Mr. de Valera, whom she characterizes as *guide audacieux, prudent, tenace, qui conduit l'Irlande à l'indépendance.* This

pamphlet she concludes with the following paragraphs, which I have translated as closely as possible:

'The economic policy adopted by the Government of Mr. de Valera, a policy which aims, as far as possible, at providing Ireland with her own means of subsistence, is so obviously in conformity with the best interests of the nation that there can be no thought of discarding it. This policy, when it has been carried on long enough to produce all its results, will mean that the economic weapon on which England has relied will be utterly useless in the future.

'The road to independence now seems to lie open, the long-desired goal is near attainment. It must, however, be remembered that the Free State is not the whole of Ireland. As Mr. de Valera has openly declared, as long as there exists an artificial frontier, created by England, it will be impossible to look on the Irish question as settled.

'On the other hand, impossible as it seems, there is always the possibility of a reversal of public opinion. . . . If we suggest such a possibility, it is not because we think it is greatly to be feared. At present the Irish people seems firmly resolved to continue its peaceful progress to the goal of liberty.

'By its wise policy of internal pacification, Mr. de Valera's Government, little by little, is bringing all true Irishmen together; reviving the spirit of Wolfe Tone, it seeks to obliterate the old divisions, so that all may work together for the common good, and Ireland march steadily forward until she attains her independence.'

One need not be an adversary of Mr. de Valera or his self-sufficing policy to realize that the attainment of

republican unity is not so easy as all that! Even when all true Irishmen have been brought together under the standard of Fianna Fail—which, in itself, is a task requiring ingenuity and patience—there may be economic difficulties which will give pause to responsible statesmen. In time the new industries which the Government is fostering may absorb all those needing work and wage; but if that were the case at the present moment, women trade unionists, and feminists in general, would not have been up in arms at the Government's proposal concerning the employment of women. The proposal, namely, to give power to a minister to bar women from certain forms of wage-earning—with the object, of course, of decreasing unemployment amongst men. All state authority, at a pinch, will sacrifice the interests of women to those of men; but the pinch must be fairly hard when an Irish Government makes up its mind to deprive women citizens of their means of livelihood—with the accompanying probability that many of those who are thrown out of work will have to earn their bread on the street.

This fact of unemployment, so long as it continues, must have its effect on the movement for that complete independence which means breaking away from the Empire. As long as the Free State is unable to afford employment and livelihood to her entire population, the probability is that Mr. de Valera (or whoever may succeed him), however ardently republican at heart, will hesitate before taking the formal and final step that commits him to complete separation. He may have to take it sooner than he wishes, thrust on by his impatient extremists; but if that happens, the chances are that

he will not take it with enthusiasm; office—the responsible position of President—has shown him disadvantages he was able to ignore in opposition. For Ireland, as republic, will be a country foreign to Great Britain; a country whose citizens, because they are foreigners, will come under the laws affecting aliens and be excluded from the British labour market. Mr. de Valera is no doubt aware that an Irish influx is not always welcome in the cities of England and Scotland; he may have heard mutterings of protest from Liverpool and Glasgow —where it is more than possible that a good many ratepayers would welcome the news that the Free State had cut loose from the Empire. His hope, he has declared, is for an Ireland whose children are not born to be exported like cattle; but until that hope is realized, by his own methods, Great Britain is conveniently adjacent, and, in addition to those who settle in Great Britain, there are rural populations who would be hard put to it to get through the year if they did not cross the water for the harvesting. If Mr. de Valera's hope were realized—by methods not his own, by a British bar to Irish immigration—the economic results to the Free State might be anything but satisfactory. This, and not the wrath of Great Britain in arms, is the real weapon that Republican Ireland has to fear; a weapon it would forge against itself on the day it declared for independence. And in this connection it has to be noted that the Free State, at bidding of the Catholic Church, firmly discountenances birth control. In the world of to-day where migrants are not always welcome overseas —where their number, on the contrary, is limited by quota—in that world of to-day a prolific Ireland, whose

children can no longer be 'exported' at will, is likely to have its economic and political difficulties. . . . And it is, one may guess, the thought of such difficulties looming ahead that keeps Mr. de Valera balancing on his tight-rope—between the deep sea of a growing population which will have to be fed and the devil of his angry Republicans. Even as these pages are going to press comes fresh indication of the clash between principle and economic necessity—news of open compromise with the ideal of Ireland self-supporting. Not only continuation of the coal-cattle pact between Ireland and Great Britain, but further admission of alien goods in return for a lowering of fiscal barriers between the farmer and his British market. That British market which, a year or two ago, Mr. de Valera is said to have thanked God that his countrymen had done with for good!

NOTES

NOTES

Chapter III—The Free State Army

ACCORDING to the *Official Handbook*, 1932, the regular army of the Free State (which the Irish purist describes as Oglaigh na hEireann) numbers about six thousand; but, with the reserve and volunteer reserve, it is estimated that the force capable of being put into the field is thirty to forty thousand men. The reserve consists primarily of a sort of militia; the militiamen getting a three months' recruit training and being called up for a month once a year; while the volunteer reserve is a part-time force for all ranks and 'resembles in principle the United States National Guard or British Territorials.' An Officers' Training Corps at the several universities undergoes similar conditions of training. The system, states the handbook, was not, at that date, in full working order, but when its aims have been realized 'there should be always available sufficient cadres to enlist, train, encadre, assimilate, and staff a force of adequate power to defend the country from external aggression. Since only service at home is contemplated it is calculated that a certain minimum time would be available to do this; and unquestionably the machinery for the purpose is in process of development.' As in the day of British garrisons, the Curragh is still the military centre of the country. The handbook states that, owing to the small number of recruits required annually for the regular army, it is possible to insist on a high standard, and appearances bear out the statement. A retired British officer whom I questioned was also in entire agreement; the men were an excellent type and from the beginning had had the advantage of training by N.C.O.s who knew their job, having learned it in the British army.

It may be of interest to add the terms of the oath administered to the Free State recruit. After solemnly swearing (or declaring) that he has freely and voluntarily enlisted as a soldier in Oglaigh na hEireann, he goes on to 'solemnly swear (or declare) that I will bear true faith and allegiance to, and against all enemies whomsoever, defend, Saorstát Eireann and its Constitution as by law established and I will render good and true service and obedience to the Oireachtas and Government of Saorstát Eireann under the Constitution and that I will submit myself to discipline and obey without question the orders of the officers appointed over me according to law and further that I will not while I am a soldier in Oglaigh na hEireann join, or be a member of, or subscribe to, any political society or organization whatsoever or any secret society whatsoever.'

There is an air force in being, but so far the Free State navy appears to consist of a vessel entitled the *Muirchu*, which performs the double function of chasing foreign trawlers when they poach in Free State waters and affording material for quip and jest to *Dublin Opinion*, that joyous equivalent of *Punch*.

Chapter VIII—The Four Masters

The Four Masters, whose *Annals* are a main source of reference for the student of Irish history, performed their work of collection and compilation during the earlier decades of the seventeenth century. Two of them were brothers, Michael and Conaire O'Clery, and a third their cousin, also an O'Clery; 'all members of a family which for generations had been the historians of the O'Donnells; and Fearfeasa O'Mulconry, whose family were hereditary poets of the Kings of Connacht. Their leader was Michael O'Clery, who, fearing that all the records of the Gaelic race might be destroyed in the general ruin that prevailed, spent many years in collecting every manuscript he could find in any

part of Ireland. He brought his materials to the Franciscan monastery of Donegal, and there for over four years (1632–36) he and his colleagues devoted themselves to their task, supported by the hospitality of the monastery, and by the generous patronage of Fergal O'Gara, chief of Coolavin. The result of their labours is the famous *Annals*, which form a record of the history of Ireland to the year 1616. Like the earlier annals, they are *not in narrative form*, but merely give each isolated event in order of time, and they are written in a "literary" or pedantic dialect used only by those trained in the old bardic schools.'[1] . . . The Four Masters are constantly alluded to by enthusiasts for the Gaelic cult in spite of the fact that many of the events narrated in the *Annals* do not fit comfortably into the framework of a Gaelic Utopia.

Chapter IX—Authorship in Irish

How far the attempt to revive the national language as a means of literary expression has been attended with success it is impossible for one unlearned in Gaelic to estimate; but any work dealing with the language revival will usually supply the names of authors who have made Gaelic their medium. In the *Short History of the Irish People*, from which I have several times quoted, there is a list of about a dozen names of modern Gaelic authors, both poets and prose writers—whose catalogued achievements (as the authors of the *Short History* admit) do not make imposing reading. 'It must,' they say, 'be admitted that during the past thirty years the efforts of the best educated writers of Irish were mostly directed to propagandist work and to writing school texts—the only books in Irish for which there was even a moderate demand. The great creative genius—the Irish Chaucer or Dante or Walter Scott—has certainly not yet arrived. Indeed so far

[1] *A Short History of the Irish People*, Hayden and Moonan.

as literature in Irish, in the strict sense, is concerned, the amount produced during the past generation is not conspicuous.'

There is, of course, nothing surprising in this lack of outstanding merit; whatever may be the case in years to come, literary Ireland of to-day, in so far as it elects to make use of Gaelic, is seeking to express its thoughts in a foreign language. Proof of that is the statement quoted above that 'the only books in Irish for which there is even a moderate demand' are school texts and propaganda volumes; it is impossible to produce creative literature in a language that is not read for pleasure. Here and there, no doubt, there are exceptions to the rule of mediocre achievement in Irish; men to whom the language is more than accomplishment, who have absorbed its spirit, as well as its vocabulary, and can make it their flexible instrument. But for the present such writers in the Gaelic tongue must needs be exceptions to the general run of the school-taught.

Chapter X—The Wild Geese

It was Lecky who said that the history of Catholic Ireland in the eighteenth century must be sought in the annals of Europe; the Wild Geese, the Irishmen who streamed from Ireland in the years that followed the Williamite victory, took service all over the European continent—took service and in many cases rose to distinction. Lally-Tollendal, who came near to winning India for France, was son to an emigrant who, in Galway, was Lally of Tullindaly. Clarke, Duc de Feltre, Napoleon's war minister, came of Irish emigrant stock. One Richard Wall was Prime Minister of Spain in the eighteenth century and a Lawless was Spanish ambassador to England. A Lacy who served in the army of Peter the Great died as Russian Governor of Livonia; his son was the Austrian Field-Marshal Lacy. Irish Browns gave one field-marshal to Austria and another to Russia; it was in Austria, also, that

the Taaffes rose to rank and influence. O'Donnells became dukes of Tetuan in Spain and an O'Reilly was commander of the Spanish armies. (These are some of the names that illustrate the proverbial tendency of Irishmen to do better abroad than at home.) For the rank and file of the emigrants there was first and foremost the Irish brigade in the service of France; which came into being after the Treaty of Limerick, with Sarsfield's men, and remained in existence till 1792—exactly a hundred years. It fought for the French in all the Marlborough battles, where its Protestant countrymen were fighting on the other side; in one of them, Malplaquet, two 'Royal Irish Regiments'—one French, one British—actually engaged each other. It was Irish regiments who saved Cremona from Eugene and his Austrians; taken by surprise, so the story goes, they turned out of bed and fought in their shirts, and won! But their crowning achievement was Fontenoy, when their charge to the shout of 'Remember Limerick!' turned a doubtful battle against Cumberland. George II, when the news of the battle reached him, is said to have cursed the Penal Laws that deprived him of soldiers such as these. The brigade, though it was always officered mostly by Irishmen, towards the end of its existence admitted men of other nations to its ranks, since Irishmen no longer enlisted in sufficient numbers; when the Revolution broke out most of its officers were Royalists, many of them emigrated and the brigade itself lost its identity and character, though it was not formally dissolved until after the Restoration. Throughout the eighteenth century there was also an Irish brigade in Spain and an Irish regiment in Naples. It was in 1793, the year after the passing of the French brigade, that Irish regiments were first raised for the British service without the imposition of a religious test and, from that time forth, Catholic Irishmen entered freely into the British army.

Chapter XII—Irish Secret Societies

The list of secret societies in Ireland is a lengthy one and the greater number have derived their motive-power from grievance connected with the land. One of the most feared of the earlier societies, the Whiteboys, was a south of Ireland *Vehmgericht*, originating in County Limerick somewhere about the middle of the eighteenth century. Its object was resistance to the payment of excessive tithes and rent, and it directed its frequently brutal activities against the tenants who paid the high rentals as well as the landlords who demanded them. In the approved manner of secret societies it exercised a terrorism which made it next to impossible to get evidence against it, and, as regards the blackleg farmer, its methods were those of a trade union, but a trade union of merciless ferocity—its members did not shrink from torture, mutilation, and murder. The society owed its name of Whiteboys to the fact that part of the disguise which its members adopted on their midnight expeditions was a white shirt worn over their clothes. A later society of the same ruthless, conspiratorial type was that of the Ribbonmen of the eighteen-twenties—also called into being by much the same causes and grievances. It was this organization that Daniel O'Connell —who always set his face against physical force—did his best to discourage and disband. Associations given to violence and the taking of secret oaths were not confined to Celtic Ireland; they flourished on the soil of the Plantation. Much about the time the Whiteboys were terrorizing Munster, certain Protestants of the North banded together in a similar organization, known as the Oakboys, whose object, in the first place, was to resist the forced labour of road-making. In more than one of these lawless associations religious hatred was mingled with agrarian grievance; the Peep o' Day Boys were Ulstermen who combined against the Catholic farmers of the North, whom they accused of outbidding them for the

ownership of land. The Catholics, as a matter of course, countered by forming another lawless body, the Defenders; and the antagonism between the two parties culminated, in 1796, in a pitched battle, fought in the County of Armagh, in which the Peep o' Day Boys were victorious, putting the Defenders to rout. This Protestant victory was signalized by the foundation of the Orange order which, in its beginnings, drove relentlessly against the Catholic farming population, turning them out of their holdings. The Irish Republican Brotherhood—otherwise the Fenians—which came into being in the eighteen-fifties, was a political, as distinct from an agrarian, society; its title denoting its purpose. The tradition of the brotherhood still endures and has left its mark on Irish history; of the seven men who, at the date of the Easter revolt, signed the manifesto issued in the name of a Provisional Government of the Irish Republic all save one were members of the I.R.B. Yet another 'physical force' association was the Invincibles; its chief title to remembrance being that it was responsible for the Phoenix Park murders and also for that of the informer, James Carey, by whose evidence the four assassins of Cavendish and Burke were convicted. Carey, having hanged his accomplices, was sent out of the country for his better safety; the precaution, however, was useless, as he was shot on the voyage to South Africa by an agent of the Invincibles—who, in his turn, was duly hanged for his execution of secret-society 'justice.' The fact that, with certain death to follow, an agent was found to execute 'justice' goes far to explain the traditional power of the secret society in Ireland.

Chapter XII—Wolfe Tone

Theobald Wolfe Tone, the son of a Dublin coachmaker and himself a barrister, was chiefly responsible for the founding of the Society of United Irishmen—in 1791, at Belfast. His ultimate aim was the overthrow of British power and the

establishment of an Irish Republic—hence the honour in which he is held in present-day Ireland. As a matter of course he looked for aid to the young republic of France, the enemy of England; what he hoped for was a French expeditionary force, co-operating with Irish revolt. He urged the project on the French Government and did his best to arouse the interest of Napoleon, but Napoleon's thoughts were turned to the East, upon Egypt. Hoche was more sympathetic, and in 1796 an expedition under his command set sail from Brest. Luck was against it, however; it encountered bad weather, which scattered the ships, and returned to France without striking a blow. In spite of this failure, Tone persevered, and in 1798 induced the French Government to dispatch another expedition, which Tone himself accompanied. For the second time luck was against the invaders; as the French ships neared Lough Swilly they were sighted and attacked by a British squadron; some of the smaller French vessels escaped, but the flagship, on which Wolfe Tone was voyaging, was finally forced to surrender. Tone was brought ashore with the other prisoners, and recognized at Letterkenny by one of his contemporaries at Trinity College. The fact that he held a French commission could not save him; he was a subject of King George III and, by law, a traitor to his sovereign. Taken to Dublin, he was tried by court martial and sentenced to death, by hanging; he petitioned to be shot, that he might die a soldier's death, and when this grace was refused he wounded himself in the throat with a small knife he had managed to conceal. The wound was not immediately fatal; he lingered some days before he died.

As a living patriot, Wolfe Tone was not particularly effective; he counts more in death than he counted in life and is obviously the most popular figure among the national heroes of Ireland. In addition to the rival celebrations at the graveside of Bodenstown, the Republican Press keeps his memory green—and there is even a *Wolfe Tone Annual* that breathes fire

and fury against England. When I was in Dublin, in June 1935, at one time the only play running was written round his life and death; it was produced, in an unpretentious little hall, by a company calling itself the Torch Theatre—which, judging by its standard of acting, is very much an amateur enterprise. For the play, considered as a work of the theatre, there was not very much to be said; but the audience got plenty of patriotic, anti-British sentiment which they applauded with due satisfaction.

The fact that the hero of Republican Ireland is a suicide is proof that the Republican Irishman does not always identify his politics with the teaching of his Church, which holds suicide to be mortal sin. All the same the difficulty is felt and a convenient legend seems to be evolving; in one historical manual for the use of the young I came across the suggestion that Tone had not taken his own life but had been done to death in prison by the British authorities—who presumably changed their mind about the hanging and preferred to stab him with a pen-knife. The theory, I found, was not peculiar to the writer of the manual and it is, as I have said, convenient to good Catholics anxious to reconcile Catholic teaching with fervid admiration for Tone.

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